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Wind speaker




Canada's source for Aboriginal news, issues and culture

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Hoping to 'reset' relationship

Prime Minister Stephen Harper is joined by His Excellency David Johnston, Governor General of Canada participate in a smudging ceremony at the Crown-First Nations Gathering. Chiefs from across Canada gathered in Ottawa on Jan. 24, 2012 hoping to reset the relationship between First Nations and the Crown.

See full story and more photos on page 8.

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PMO Photo by Deb Ransom



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Canada

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Prime Minister/ First Nations singing from different songbooks 8

To help re-set the relationship between the Crown and First Nations people within Canada, leaders of the Anishinabek Nation offered up a symbolic gesture. Just before the opening ceremonies of the Crown First Nations Gathering on Jan. 24, a wampum belt was set on the stage, backwards, then righted immediately following the smudging, prayers and gift exchange.

Private hospital development planned by Westbank nation 9

A high-end, privately funded healthcare facility is slated for development on Westbank First Nation territory in Kelowna B.C., band Chief Robert Louie has announced.

Appeals Court says Residential School class-actions can proceed 10

Newfoundland and Labrador residential school survivors who were excluded from the initial Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement (IRSSA) have been given the go-ahead by that province's Court of Appeal to launch a lawsuit against the federal government. The ruling was delivered Dec. 21, 2011.

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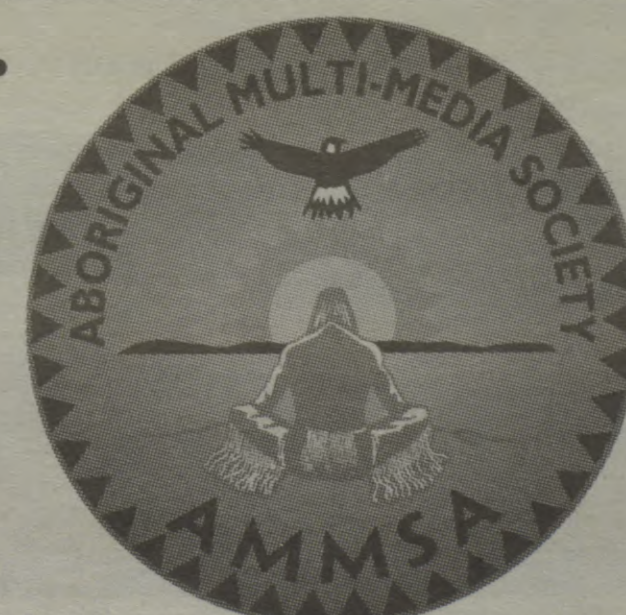
By late afternoon it might normally be difficult to engage 32 brains in a Grade 5 classroom, but when the now late Alma Kytwayhat was invited to share Indigenous ways of knowing with students, minds remained alert and the questions came fast and furious.



Windspeaker is published by the Aboriginal Multi-Media Society (AMMSA) Canada's largest publisher of Aboriginal news and information.

AMMSA's other publications include:

- Alberta Sweetgrass — The Aboriginal Newspaper of Alberta
- Saskatchewan Sage — The Aboriginal Newspaper of Saskatchewan
- Business Quarterly — Canada's Aboriginal Business Magazine





National Energy Board
Notice of Public Hearing
GH-001-2012

On 24 January 2012, the National Energy Board (NEB or Board) announced a public hearing to consider an application from NOVA Gas Transmission Ltd. (NGTL) under the National Energy Board Act (NEB Act) to construct and operate the proposed Northwest Mainline Komie North Extension (Project).

Project Overview

The Project is a proposed expansion of NGTL's existing system in northeastern British Columbia (BC) and northwestern Alberta (AB). The Project components include approximately 130 km of new pipeline and facilities split between two locations:

- the Komie North Section, consisting of approximately 97 km of 914 mm (36 inch) outside diameter pipe located approximately 110 km north of Fort Nelson, BC, beginning at the proposed Fortune Creek Meter Station and proceeding in a southeasterly direction to a tie-in point on the Horn River Mainline (Cabin Section) near the Encana Cabin Gas Plant; and
the Chinchaga Section, consisting of approximately 33 km of 1,219 mm (48 inch) outside diameter pipe located approximately 76 km northwest of Manning, AB, paralleling NGTL's existing Chinchaga Lateral Loop No. 3 from the existing Chinchaga Meter Station to a tie-in point at the existing Meikle River Compressor Station.

NGTL is proposing to commence clearing during winter 2012-2013, commence pipeline and facility construction during fall and winter 2013-2014, and have the Project in-service by the second quarter of 2014.

Location of Documents

An electronic copy of the application is available for viewing at the Board's internet site at:

THE NEB ONLINE RECORD

www.neb-one.gc.ca and select language preference

- click on: Major Applications and Projects
click on: NOVA Gas Transmission Ltd. - Application for the Northwest Mainline Komie North Extension (GH-001-2012)
click on: Regulatory Documents
click on: Application pursuant to sections 52 and 58 of Part III of the National Energy Board Act [filing A33664]

Paper copies of the application are available at the following locations:

Offices:

THE NEB LIBRARY: 1st Floor of Barclay Building, 444 - 7th Avenue S.W., Calgary, AB T2P 0X8
NOVA GAS TRANSMISSION LTD. OFFICES: 450 - 1st Street S.W., Calgary, AB T2P 5H1

Public Libraries:

FORT NELSON PUBLIC LIBRARY: 5315 - 50th Avenue S., Fort Nelson, BC
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HIGH LEVEL MUNICIPAL LIBRARY: 10601 - 103 Street, High Level, AB
MANNING MUNICIPAL LIBRARY: Box 810, 311 - 4th Street S.E., Manning, AB

Public Hearing

The National Energy Board will hold a public hearing regarding NGTL's application to obtain the evidence and views of interested persons and groups on the application.

To facilitate public participation in a fair and efficient manner, the Board has established the procedures and directions as set out in its Hearing Order.

Any person interested in participating in the hearing should consult the Board's Hearing Order GH-001-2012 for further background and instructions. The Hearing Order is available at the locations listed above. The Hearing Order contains only those events and dates up to the issuance of the List of Parties and the service of Interventions and Declarations. Shortly after 6 March 2012, further procedures and directions will be provided through an Amended Hearing Order, which will describe the remaining events necessary to complete the hearing process. The Amended Hearing Order will be available at the locations listed above.

The deadline for interested persons to file applications to intervene, and for government agencies to file declarations to be a Government Participant is 6 March 2012. This is also the deadline for interested people or groups to provide:

- Comments on the Draft Scope of the Environmental Assessment
Comments on the List of Issues

The method for submitting the above materials is described in the Hearing Order. The Draft Scope of the Environmental Assessment and the List of Issues are also located in the Hearing Order.

Public Information Sessions

The Board has decided to hold a public information session in relation to this application on 22 February 2012 from 7-9 pm at the following location:

NORTHERN ROCKIES REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY CITY HALL (RAVEN ROOM)
5319 - 50th Avenue South, Fort Nelson, BC V0C 1R0

This session will focus on the Board's role, hearing process, and the different ways to participate in the hearing. Any member of the public is welcome to attend.

Further information sessions may be held throughout the hearing process if there is sufficient interest. Persons interested in future sessions should request them through contacting Brenda Price, Process Advisor, at the contact information below:

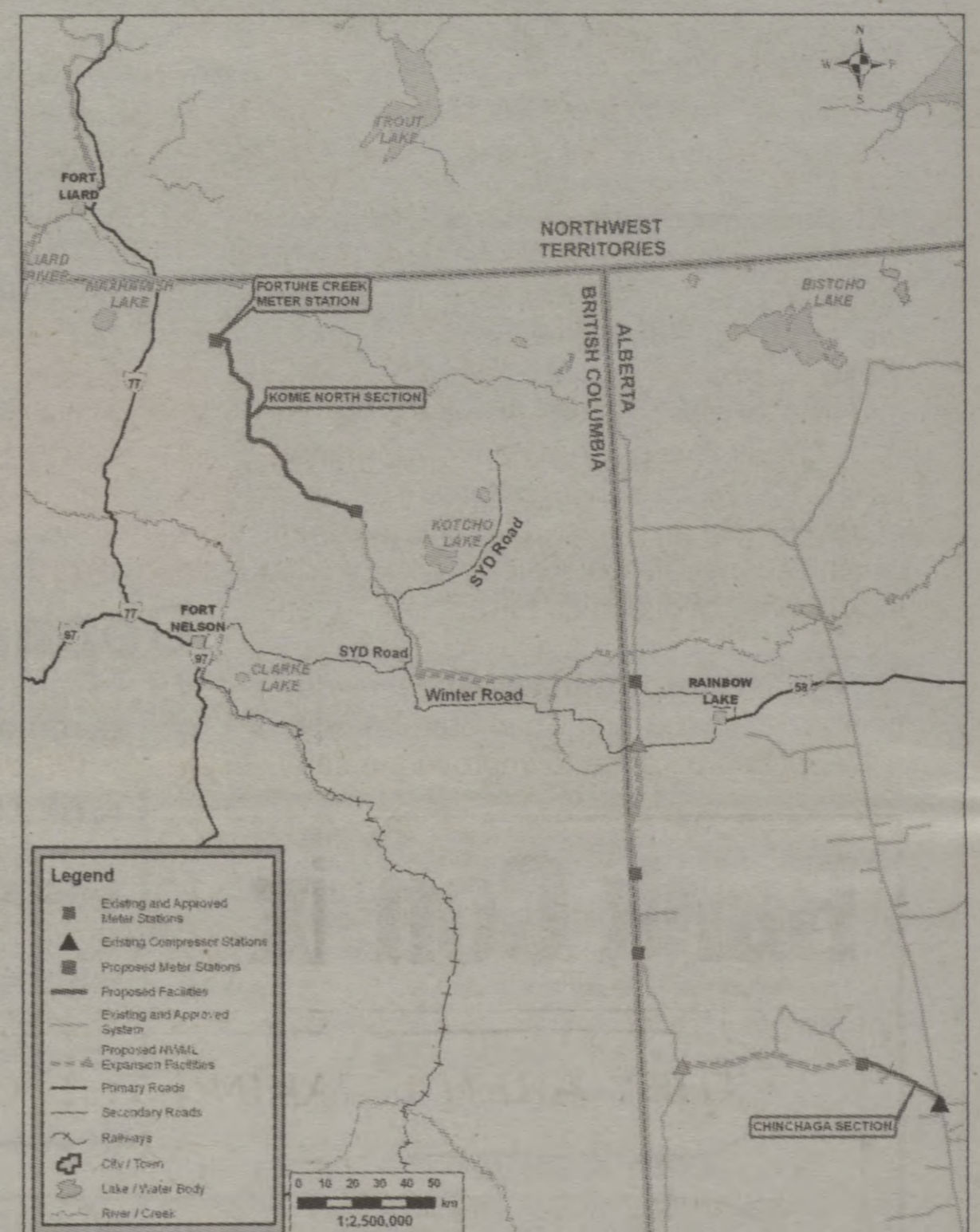
Ms. Brenda Price, Hearing Process Advisor, National Energy Board, 444 - 7th Avenue S.W., Calgary, AB T2P 0X8
Telephone 403-299-3161 or at the toll free number 1-800-899-1265

Please specify the "NOVA Gas Transmission Ltd. - Application for the Northwest Mainline Komie North Extension"

Please note that these sessions are not a forum for discussing the merits or substance of the Project, but are intended to assist people in understanding the Board's hearing process and procedures.

NATIONAL ENERGY BOARD

L. George
Acting Secretary of the Board



First step or not, our situation remains unacceptable

We'd like to take some time here to acknowledge some terrible losses our communities have suffered since the last time we published, including, and perhaps most notably, the community of Burns Lake where fire destroyed a sawmill, killing two men and leaving many in this village injured and out of work indefinitely. The pain of that situation will be acutely felt as people mourn both the personal and professional devastation of the fire. Our thoughts and prayers are with these families. Once the grieving is put aside there will come a time when finding other employment will be necessary, and in this region that will be difficult; perhaps even impossible. We wonder where hope and help for these people will come from.

We also have a heavy heart over the loss of two young boys at the Nanoose First Nation, Vancouver Island, who perished in a house fire on Jan. 25. The boys had been sent to a neighbor's to keep them from harm during a wind storm that threatened to topple trees near their home. The storm knocked out electricity. The candles being used to light the home where they were staying are believed to be the cause of the fire.

Jordan and Devon Drake are the latest victims in a string of house fires on First Nations reserves. Compounding the risks our people face in our communities are poorly constructed housing and overcrowding; issues that were among the long list of complaints that First Nations leaders hoped would be addressed at the Crown/First Nations Gathering held in Ottawa Jan. 24. Any solutions that could have been discussed come too late for these children. How many other fires will we be enduring before our housing needs are resolved?

It took a plane crash in northern Ontario at Spirit Lake First Nation to bring attention to the dangers of travelling in and out of our remote communities by air. Four people lost their lives on Jan. 10 for the lack of navigational aids for the small planes that we rely on.

"We have people travelling every day out of necessity," said Grand Chief Stan Beardy.

"A lot can be done to improve the safety of air

travel in the Far North. We have to get proper navigational gear in place, there has to be proper weather reporting available close to the communities, we have to make sure the condition[s] of aircraft travelling up North [are] monitored. My people's lives are as valuable as anybody's in Canada."

Add it to the list of things for Prime Minister Stephen Harper to consider while we sit quietly in the corner banging our heads on our desks waiting for some action.

A first step—that's how Assembly of First Nations Shawn Atleo described the Crown/First Nation Gathering as it came to its conclusion. A first step to renew the "historic" relationship with the Crown.

Why aren't we farther down the path than that? We are disappointed that we are back here at square one and nobody is asking why that is?

Dealing with the federal government is like playing a game of Snakes and Ladders. There is great energy and work expended to move up the board—like say, in striking a deal called the Kelowna Accord which had a vision forward and the financial commitment to back it up—only to hit a long skid back to the beginning.

Prime Minister Harper tells us that for the years his party has been in power he has been distracted by elections, minority governments, and a global financial crisis. But is that an excuse?

Life tells us there is never a perfect time to act when dealing with issues of importance and concern. There will always be distractions and we just can't accept that the federal government places such a low priority on us that our issues have been allowed to linger all this time.

Count that lost time among the insults to the injuries our people have been subjected to. Many years have been allowed to go by without change. Count lost productivity, lost opportunities, and, most appalling, the lost lives that we have had to endure.

The cost to our communities just keeps piling up, as do the casualties. And it's just not right.

Windspeaker

[rants and raves]

Page 5 Chatter

THE TIMES COLONIST HAS REPORTED

that there will not be any charges against former Seattle police officer Ian Birk for the 2010 shooting death of woodcarver John T. Williams. Williams was a member of the Ditidaht First Nation on Vancouver Island. The U.S. Attorney's Office and the FBI believe the evidence is just not there to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that Birk acted willfully and with the intent to violate Williams' civil rights when he killed the carver on a Seattle sidewalk. Williams, who was hearing impaired, did not respond to Birk's repeated demands that he drop a knife he was using to carve a piece of wood while he walked along the sidewalk. Williams was shot four times. Birk resigned from the department amid public outrage over the incident and Seattle settled with Williams' family for \$1.5 million.

WAWATAY NEWS REPORTS THAT

a group of First Nations people from northwestern Ontario will run a marathon in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil on July 8 to help fight diabetes. The participants are currently working to raise funds, with a goal of \$6,100 each, that will go toward Team Diabetes Canada. They must have \$2,500 raised by March in order to secure their spot to run. The 42-kilometer marathon starts at Recreio dos Bandeirantes beach and will end at Flamengo beach in Brazil. About nine million people live with diabetes in Canada. The condition strikes the First Nation community particularly hard.

THE CANADIAN COUNCIL FOR ABORIGINAL BUSINESS INDUCTED

Gregory Koostachin of Attawapiskat, Ont., and David Tuccaro of Fort Chipewyan, Alta. into the Aboriginal Business Hall of Fame. Tuccaro and Koostachin both demonstrated entrepreneurial spirit early in life, said the council, building on success and ultimately operating several businesses over the course of their careers. The inductees also demonstrate a commitment to the prosperity of their communities through financial support and volunteerism. Aboriginal business leaders inducted into the Hall of Fame are recognized for their accomplishments in achieving sustainable economic development in Aboriginal communities. Tuccaro recently has donated \$50,000 to the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation. "I am fortunate enough to be in a position where I have the ability to support causes that are committed to ensuring Indigenous people, especially our youth, have the same opportunities as everyone else," he said. "With the upcoming 19th annual National Aboriginal Achievement Awards in Vancouver on Feb. 24, what better way to show support for some of the greatest Indigenous achievers in the country." Clint Davis, president and CEO of Aboriginal business council said "Business success and commitment to community makes Dave Tuccaro and Gregory Koostachin exceptional inductees into the Aboriginal Business Hall of Fame." The Hall of Fame Awards were presented at the 14th Annual Toronto Gala on Feb. 7.

THE MÉTIS AND FRANCOPHONE

communities of Saskatchewan have inked a solidarity pact that promises the groups will put aside their differences and work together on common concerns. It is the first such pact in Canada. The agreement is the result of six years of discussions between the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan and the Assemblée communautaire francosaskoise. "When we need each other to lobby and advocate for each other and to work with each other, I think that this pact of solidarity formalizes that process, and I'm very pleased to sign it," said Robert Doucette, president of the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan. "Each of us recognizes the other community for what it is [and] recognize that we have a history," said Paul Heppelle, president of the Assemblée communautaire francosaskoise. "Perhaps that history hasn't always been the most glorious that it could've been, and we want to set that right." The organizations have worked since 2006 to "rebuild historical, cultural and social ties that were common to our peoples in past generations," according to a release.

THE ALBERTA COURT OF APPEAL

has granted leave to hear the case of Garry Hirsekorn, who challenged the provincial Métis hunting rules and was convicted last November of hunting out of season and illegal possession of wildlife. The case is linked to the Powley decision and Métis hunting rights. Justice Constance Hunt said Hirsekorn should be granted the chance to argue how the Powley case applies to Métis living on the Prairies. Said Audrey Poitras, president of the Métis Nation of Alberta, "We are extremely pleased that the Alberta Court of Appeal rejected the Alberta government's arguments to deny leave to appeal and that the court has agreed to hear this important case for all Alberta Métis." The hearing is expected in the spring.

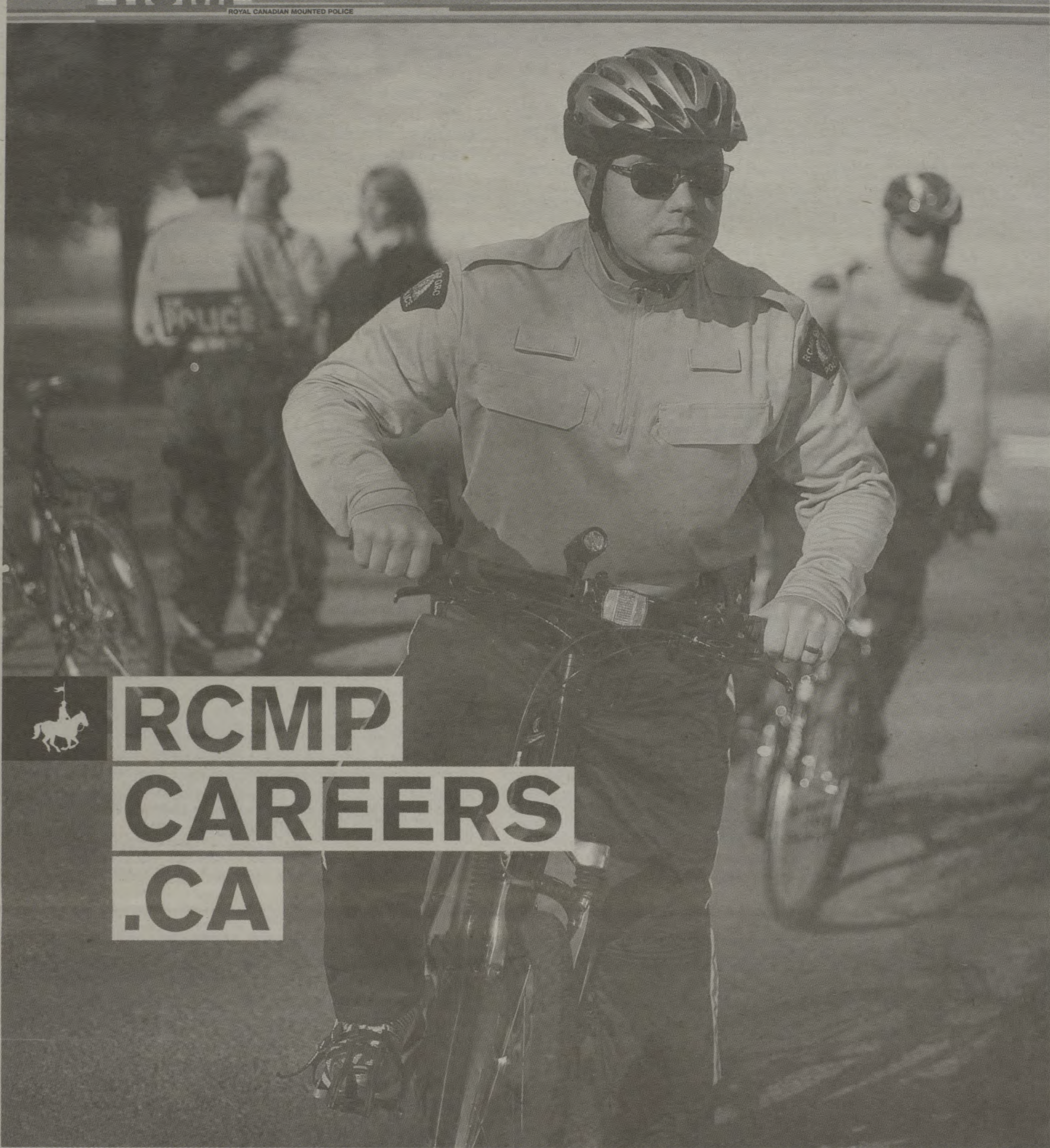
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by Adam Martin

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Dixième édition

Présenté par **insIGHT**

FORUM AUTOCHTONE

Les 19 et 20 mars 2012
Hilton Québec | Ville de Québec

La gouvernance, le développement économique et les aspects juridiques :
portrait d'un avenir prometteur

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- Projet d'entrepreneuriat à l'école Amik-Wiche du Lac Simon : voir l'école autrement pour rattrapper élèves et enseignants
- Les pourvoiries et les communautés autochtones : réalités et défis à relever

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Assembly of First Nations
WATER CONFERENCE 2012
March 5 - 7 | Edmonton, Alberta
Marriott Edmonton at River Cree Resort

The National Water Conference will include two components. On Monday, March 5, 2012, the agenda will feature discussions relating to First Nation water rights and jurisdiction. On Tuesday, March 6 and Wednesday, March 7, 2012, the agenda will feature discussions relating the technical component of delivering safe drinking water to First Nations, which will feature a tradeshow.

For more information contact Tania Jacko.

Ph. 613.241.6789 ext. 238 or email tjacko@afn.ca

Sponsorship and tradeshow opportunities available

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Government of Alberta
Environment and Water

NOTICE OF APPLICATIONS
SOUTHERN PACIFIC RESOURCE CORP.
STP MCKAY THERMAL PROJECT—PHASE 2
ATHABASCA OIL SANDS AREA

**ENERGY RESOURCES CONSERVATION BOARD
APPLICATION NO. 1707306**

ALBERTA ENVIRONMENT AND WATER
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT ACT
APPLICATION NO. 002-255245
WATER ACT FILE NO. 00262149
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The Energy Resources Conservation Board (ERCB/Board) has received Application No. 1707306 and Alberta Environment and Water (AEW) has received *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act* (EPEA) Application No. 002-255245 and *Water Act* File No. 00262149 from Southern Pacific Resource Corp. (STP) for approval to expand the STP McKay Thermal Project (the Project) to include Phase 2. This notice is to advise interested parties that the applications are available for viewing and that the ERCB, AEW, and other government departments are now undertaking a review of the applications and associated environmental impact assessment (EIA).

Description of the Project

The Phase 2 expansion of the Project would use steam assisted gravity drainage (SAGD) thermal technology to produce bitumen at an average rate of 3816 cubic metres per day (m³/d) (24 000 barrels per day [bbl/d]) for about 25 years. The Phase 2 expansion would increase the Project's total bitumen production capacity to 5724 m³/d (36 000 bbl/d).

Based on current delineation, STP proposes to drill 216 well pairs from 36 well pads over the combined life of Phase 1 and Phase 2. The Project would include a central processing facility, thermal injection wells, production wells, utilities, and associated infrastructure. Major facility construction is planned to begin in the first quarter of 2014 with production anticipated to begin in the third quarter of 2015.

The Project is located in Township 91, Ranges 14 and 15, West of the 4th Meridian, about 40 kilometres northwest of Fort McMurray in the Athabasca Oil Sands Area.

In support of the Project, STP has prepared and submitted the following:

- Application No. 1707306 to the ERCB, pursuant to Section 10 of the *Oil Sands Conservation Act*, for approval to construct and operate Phase 2 of the Project.
- Application No. 002-255245 to AEW, pursuant to Part 2, Division 2 of the *EPEA*, for approval to construct, operate, and reclaim Phase 2 of the Project.
- An application (File No. 00262149) to AEW, pursuant to the *Water Act*, to divert a maximum of 1 424 000 m³ of groundwater per annum from wells completed in the Empress Formation. The production zones of the source wells would be from 75.6 m to 106.7 m below ground surface. The existing wells are located in Legal Subdivision (LSD) 8, Section 8, Township 91, Range 14, West of the 4th Meridian, LSD 16-8-91-14-W4M, and LSD 15-8-91-14-W4M. The proposed well would be located in LSD 10-80-91-14-W4M. The application would also divert 117 000 m³ of surface water runoff annually from a stormwater pond located in LSD 14-10-91-14-W4M.
- An EIA report associated with the above applications. The EIA forms part of the application to the ERCB.

To obtain a copy of the applications, contact

Southern Pacific Resource Corp., Suite 1700, Bow Valley Square II, 205 - 5th Avenue SW, Calgary, Alberta T2P 2V7, Attention: Mr. Vince Parsons; Telephone: 403-984-5335; Fax: 403-269-5273; Email: info@shpacific.com

To view a copy of the applications, EIA, and supporting documents, contact

ERCB Information Services, Suite 1000, 250 - 5 Street SW, Calgary, Alberta T2P 0R4; Telephone: 403-297-8311 (Option 2) (toll free: 1-855-297-8311); Viewing hours: 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
ERCB Fort McMurray Regional Office, 2nd Floor, Provincial Building, Box 15, 9915 Franklin Avenue, Fort McMurray, Alberta T9H 2K4; Telephone: 780-743-7214
Alberta Government Library, Great West Life Building, 6th Floor, 9920 - 108 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T5K 2M4; Telephone: 780-427-5828 (toll free: 780-310-0000)

Copies of the applications are also available for viewing at

Edmonton Public Library, Stanley A. Milner Branch, 7 Sir Winston Churchill Square, Edmonton, Alberta T5J 2V4; Telephone: 780-496-7000
Fort McMurray Public Library, 151 MacDonald Drive, Fort McMurray, Alberta T9H 5C5; Telephone: 780-743-7800

To File a Statement of Concern

Under Section 73 of *EPEA* and Section 109 of the *Water Act*, any person who may be directly affected by the *EPEA* application or the *Water Act* application may submit a written statement of concern. Statements of concern under the *EPEA* and *Water Act* must be submitted by **April 6, 2012**. Please quote Application No. 002-255245 (*EPEA*) or File No. 00262149 (*Water Act*) when submitting a statement of concern. If no statements of concern are received, the *EPEA* and *Water Act* applications may be approved without further notice. Failure to file a statement of concern may affect the right to file a Notice of Appeal with the Environmental Appeal Board. Please submit statements of concern to Alberta Environment and Water, Regulatory Approvals Centre, 9th floor, Oxbridge Place, 9820 - 106 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T5K 2J6, Attention: Director, Northern Region; Telephone: 780-427-6311; Fax: 780-422-0154

Please note that the ERCB receives and reviews statements of concern.

Applications for Confidentiality

Section 13 of the *Energy Resources Conservation Board Rules of Practice (Rules of Practice)*, Section 35(1) of the *EPEA*, and Section 15(1) of the *Water Act (Ministerial) Regulation* require that all documents filed in respect of these proceedings must be placed on the public record. However, any party may apply for confidentiality of information. For the ERCB, any application under Section 13(2) of the *Rules of Practice* must be copied to the other parties to the proceeding. For the purposes of AEW, such requests can be filed according to Section 35(4) of the *EPEA* and Section 15(4) of the *Water Act (Ministerial) Regulation*.

For information about ERCB procedures, contact

Oil Sands and Coal Branch, In Situ Applications Group, Attention: Ammar Baig; Telephone: 403-297-7365; Fax: 403-297-3187; E-mail: ammar.baig@ercb.ca

Issued at Calgary, Alberta, on January 25, 2012.

Patricia M. Johnston, Q.C., General Counsel

Prime Minister/ First Nations singing from different songbooks



ALL PHOTOS: JENNIFER ASHAWASEGAI

Front Serpent River FN Chief Isadore Day (left), Anishinabek Nation Grand Council Elder Gord Waindubence and Grand Council Chief Patrick Madahbee hold the wampum belt for the Niagara Treaty. Back: AFN National Chief Shawn Atleo (left) and PM Stephen Harper.

By Jennifer Ashawasegai
Windspeaker Contributor

OTTAWA

To help re-set the relationship between the Crown and First Nations people within Canada, leaders of the Anishinabek Nation offered up a symbolic gesture. Just before the opening ceremonies of the Crown First Nations Gathering on Jan. 24, a wampum belt was set on the stage, backwards, then righted immediately following the smudging, prayers and gift exchange.

Anishinabek Nation Grand Council Chief Patrick Madahbee said they had brought the Treaty of Niagara belt, which sets out the nation-to-nation relationship Anishinabek has with the Crown, in backwards to signify “there’s unfinished business and there’s problems in the relationship.”

First Nations throughout the country were specific about the many issues in the relationship that are problematic and that required discussion at the gathering. It was a long list of complaints and included treaty rights, education, jurisdiction over lands, a moratorium on legislation not agreed upon by First Nations, resource revenue sharing, housing and infrastructure, economic development, as well as respect for the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

High on the agenda was the push for the Indian Act to be scrapped, something Assembly of First Nations (AFN) National Chief Shawn Atleo had included in his political platform.

In his opening remarks to participants of the Crown/First Nations Gathering, Prime Minister Stephen Harper

addressed that issue.

“Our government has no grand scheme to repeal or to unilaterally rewrite the Indian Act,” he said. “After 136 years, that tree has deep roots; blowing up the stump would just leave a big hole. However, there are ways, creative ways, collaborative ways, ways that involve consultation between our government, the provinces and First Nations leadership and communities, ways that provide options within the act, or outside of it, for practical, incremental and real change.”

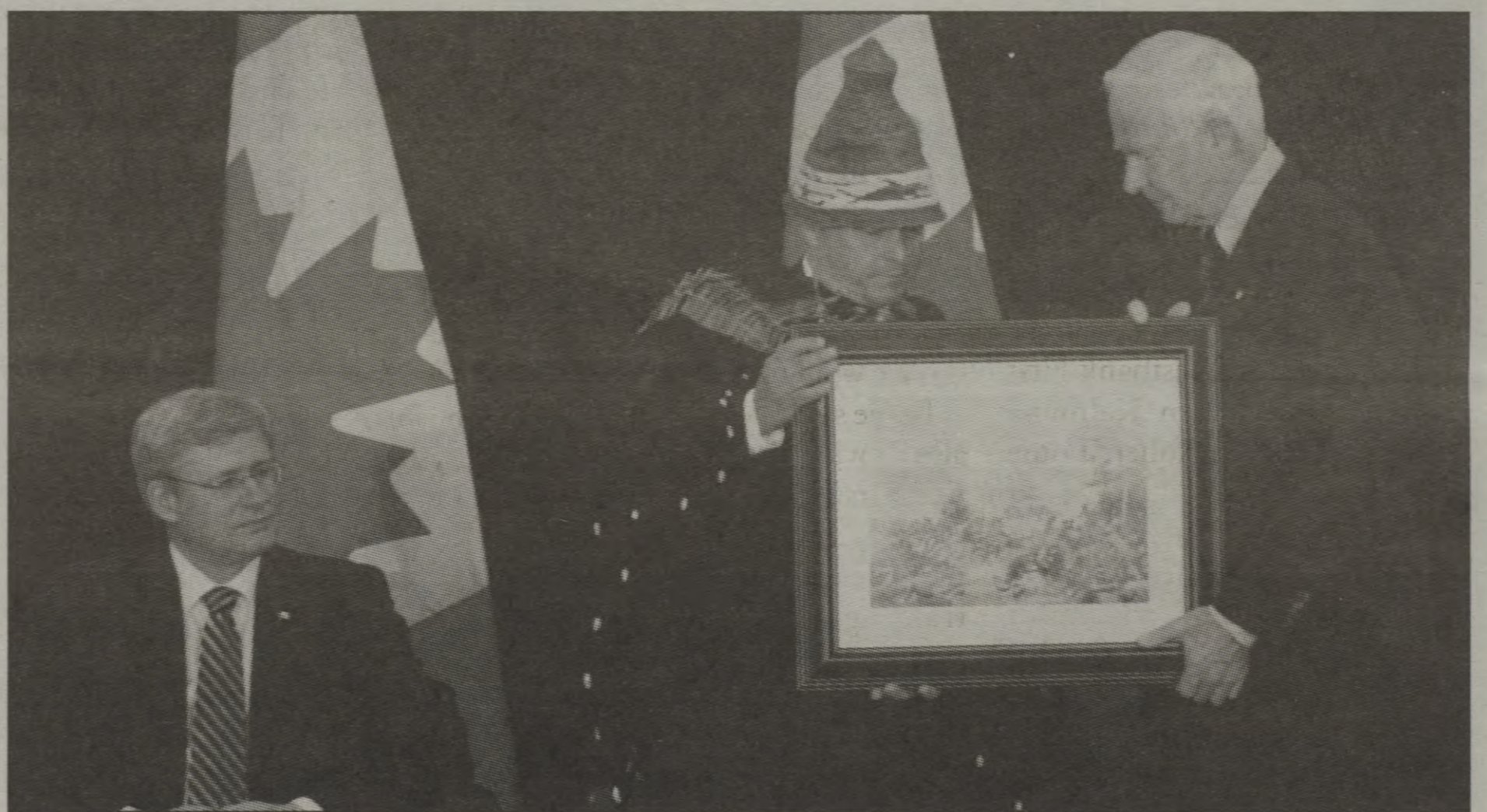
Former AFN National Chief Ovide Mercredi also addressed the Indian Act issue. He spoke after the opening ceremonies and remarks by Atleo and Harper. Mercredi talked about the limitations of the Indian Act.

“When you become a chief, you sure learn that even though you want to remain an Indian, the Indian Act is in the way. It stands in the way of economic progress. It stands in the way of our own self-determination as a people. It stands in the way of even defining who we are as a people and who can belong to our nations. It’s not just a big hole. It’s an obstacle.”

Right from the start, it seemed the Prime Minister and First Nations were on different pages about the relationship, and that fact didn’t go unnoticed by Madahbee.

“The Prime Minister... he’s still talking at a different level from what we’re talking about.”

Madahbee wasn’t the only chief to notice the different paths the chiefs and Prime Minister were walking. In an afternoon press conference, Nishnawbe-Aski Nation Grand Chief Stan Beardy said “I came here hoping that Prime Minister Stephen Harper, the government of Canada, would make some commitment and have fundamental discussions



Governor General David Johnston presents AFN Chief Shawn Atleo with a reproduction of a painting of the Battle of Queenston Heights, which he said depicts the co-operation of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal soldiers in 1812, while Prime Minister Stephen Harper looks on.

with Treaty 9 and Treaty 5, but instead, this morning, I heard discussions on training my young people to have jobs, and minor amendments to the Indian Act.”

Beardy doesn’t just want to see his people being trained in the resource industry, but rather see First Nation communities become equal partners in the opportunities available in a resource rich economy.

Many treaty chiefs went to the gathering wanting to see respect from the government over treaty rights, to see the agreements implemented so First Nations can enjoy the benefits the treaties were meant to provide.

“I want to have a fundamental discussion with Canada because we are a treaty partner. We agreed to a relationship 100 years ago. We agreed to peaceful co-existence. We agreed to share the land... But most importantly, we agreed to share in the benefits derived from our homelands, and that’s not happening at all.”

There were a few chiefs who

walked out of the meetings, unhappy with what was being said.

Eli Mandamin, the chief of Shoal Lake First Nation of Treaty 3, was one of those chiefs. He left the meeting early in the afternoon. His community straddles the Ontario/Manitoba border. The community has filed a court injunction to stop the City of Winnipeg from selling water and sewer services. Since the city draws its water from Shoal Lake, the same source of water for the First Nation, the community leadership has felt it necessary to send Winnipeg a monthly water bill.

Mandamin thought there was something seriously wrong with the discussions at the gathering.

“These ministers are proudly announcing all these minerals that they’re exporting and selling here. And those are our minerals, they don’t realize.”

Mandamin wants them to stop signing free trade agreements, and wants respect for the treaties.

Like Beardy, Mandamin didn’t hear the proper respect for the prospect of resource sharing or substantial investment in education.

Mandamin also said economic opportunities should be made available in First Nations, and implementing treaties would pave the way to positive economic development in First Nations.

While there was a lot of talk inside the gathering at 111 Sussex, outside there were more than 100 protestors demonstrating. They walked to Parliament Hill and back again. But while the demonstrators were gone from the site, a handful of people stayed behind with their purple Haudenosaunee flags. The group, representatives of the Mohawk Traditional Council of Kahnawake, refused to budge from their spots near the building. Carole McGregor with the group said the action was inside the building on Sussex, not at the Hill.

(See *Singing* on page 13.)

Private hospital development planned by Westbank nation

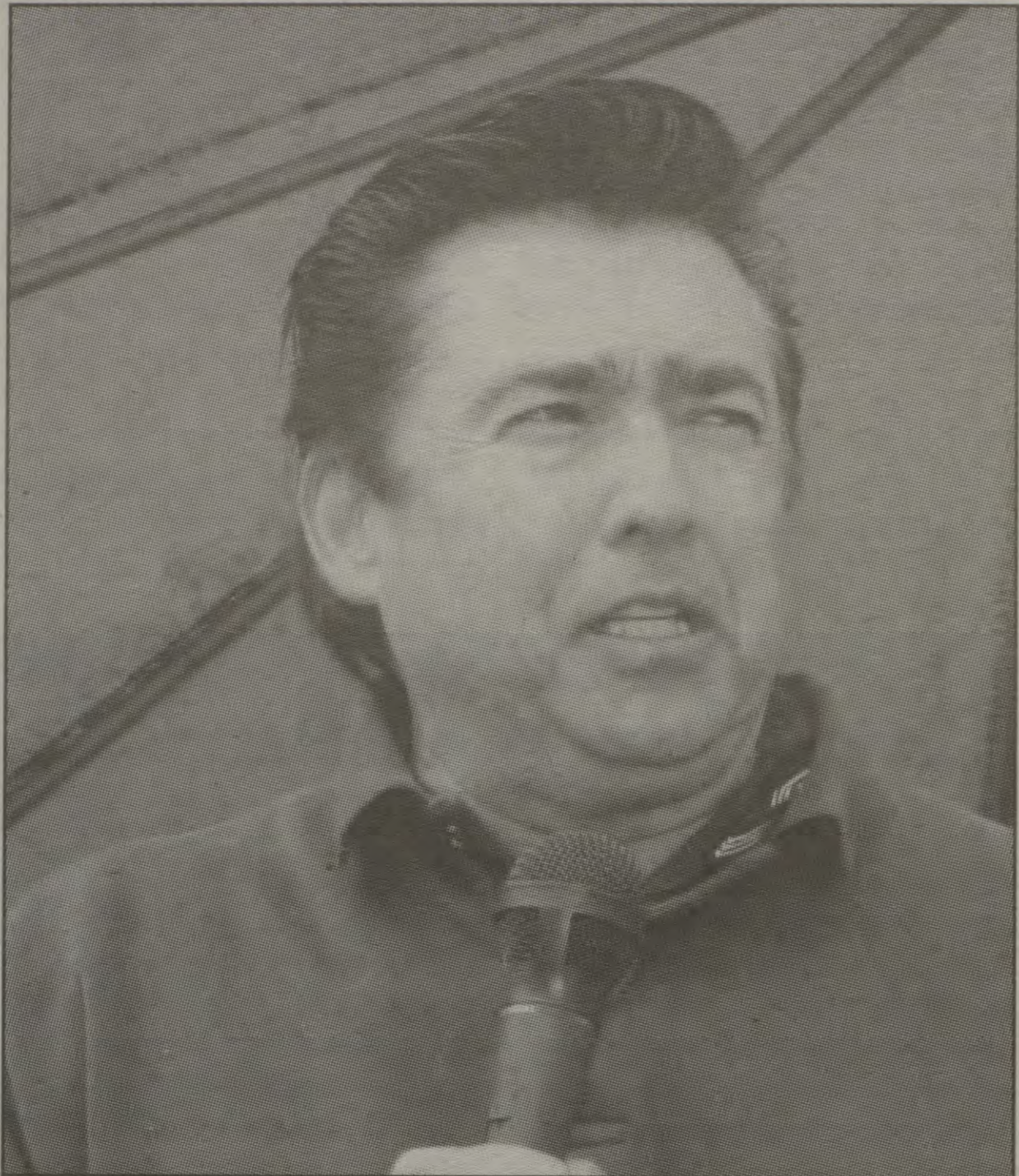


PHOTO: DEBORA STEEL

Robert Louie, Chief of the Westbank First Nation

By Shauna Lewis
Windspeaker Contributor

KELOWNA, B.C.

A high-end, privately funded healthcare facility is slated for development on Westbank First Nation territory in Kelowna B.C., band Chief Robert Louie has announced.

"Yes. It is our intention [to build a health centre]. We've been working on this for almost two years now," Louie said. "We've put a lot of thinking into this. It's the first of its kind in Canada." Louie said the facility, still in its planning and preparation stages, promises to offer first-rate medical care.

"It will be equivalent to a private hospital," he explained. The centre will provide all the services of a typical healthcare institution without the emergency department, obstetrics unit and psychiatric ward.

The private clinic will provide major organ surgeries, joint replacement procedures and cosmetic surgeries.

"It's pretty wide open as far as a hospital goes," Louie assured.

The facility, which has unofficially been named the Lake Okanagan Medical Wellness Centre, will span about 200,000 square feet and boast 100 beds in its first phase of completion.

Further, stakeholders say the complex will have all the amenities required to promote it as a five-star facility.

"Patients will be able to drink a nice bottle of wine the night before and there will be chefs preparing food," said Louie.

The chief says the plan is a win-win.

"We see it as a demand and a

need to deal first-hand with First Nations people."

It will also keep healthcare dollars in Canada and will help "deal with the huge healthcare gaps that exist in the country," he explained.

"We want to narrow that gap."

Louie said the new facility will also provide a training ground for new First Nations physicians.

"We believe this [plan] provides a high potential for training [and] we don't have enough First Nations physicians." Close to 400 new health jobs are expected to be available after the first phase of development is complete.

"That's huge," Louie said of the high number of employment opportunities promised through the plan.

But while the WestBank First Nation plans to employ Aboriginal professionals in the healthcare field, Louie said that the health care offered won't come cheap.

"You won't have to be a multi-millionaire to attend," he assured. But "people will come and they will have to pay for the quality of care they are going to get."

"This is going to be first class, so we want some of our top surgeons in the world to be a part of this," he added.

"We know that a majority of First Nations people don't have the dollars," he continued.

Not only will the facility have the best in modern healthcare equipment at its fingertips, it will be so high-tech that patients who can't afford a stay at the facility will be provided care through long-distance care plans and various technological advancements in dealing with medical resources, Louie explained.

Helping to acquire investment dollars in the project is businessman Mark McLoughlin, one half of the two partners that make up Ad Vitam, a local private corporation that has partnered with WestBank First Nation to help fund the endeavour.

"We're not looking at any money from the government or any other agency," Louie explained.

"We have the land component and we are looking to our partner to come up with the financing." In providing the land, WestBank is slated to receive a full 50 per cent of all revenue accrued from the venture

"Basically my role is in coordinating and bringing the finances together," said McLoughlin.

He has lived on the fringe of the WestBank First Nation reserve for the last four years, and has had about 10 different discussions with organizations regarding forming equity partnerships to help fund the project. He said he will continue to lobby for joint equity opportunities, even with American shareholders.

McLoughlin said he is confident the joint venture will be successful and commends the First Nation community for its business savvy.

"First and foremost, Westbank First Nations is one of the most progressive and successful bands in Canada," said McLoughlin.

"It's really quite incredible," he said, pointing to the major economic developments the band has been involved in over the years.

"This is something the members want," McLoughlin said.

"We have very strong community support to proceed with this," confirmed Louie.

"We had a 92 per cent vote [in favor of the facility] from our membership," he claimed.

Louie said the facility will not only generate financial rewards for the band, but it will provide them with priority healthcare close to home.

Moreover, the project is an active and broad step toward First Nations self-governance regarding health care in the province.

"We know that the federal and provincial governments have an agreement with the First Nation Health Authority and the intent there is to work together to close the health gap and turn authority over to the [First Nations Health Council]," said Louie.

"We see this as an opportunity to be a facility to close that gap," he explained.

The first phase of the project is expected to cost \$120 million to complete and development is tentatively set to begin in fall 2012.

Windspeaker News Briefs

A STATE OF EMERGENCY WAS

declared by Cat Lake First Nation in northern Ontario which estimates seven out of 10 adults and youth there are abusing prescription medication. Cat Lake is looking for help in dealing with a pandemic of oxycodone use. "Cat Lake First Nation can no longer deal with the situation of prescription drug abuse alone. This affects all of our community, not only the users," said Chief Matthew Keewaykapow. "Our Elders are impacted when they have to worry about providing for their grandchildren as money for food disappears to purchase drugs. We also have general security concerns as vandalism and thefts have increased across the community." The community is working with police to expedite search warrants. Cat Lake even developed its own search and seizure law, but it was challenged in court and found to be unconstitutional. There have been a series of drug busts in the territory but the community complains that the dealers are soon out on the streets again. The chief and council have assembled a task force that includes addicts to discuss how to best address the issue. One recommendation was to begin a suboxone program, which is an opiate substitute in pill form. Health Canada said workers will be moved to the community. Cat Lake is not the only nation to be suffering a prescription drug epidemic of misuse. Eabametoong First Nation in northwestern Ontario has made news lately, estimating that 80 per cent of the adult population is hooked on prescription pain killers.

WHITECAP DAKOTA FIRST NATION

in Saskatchewan and the federal government have signed a Framework Agreement to negotiate self-government. "The signing of this agreement is an important milestone along a path of renewal and reconciliation," said Aboriginal Affairs Minister John Duncan. "Self-government agreements give Aboriginal groups greater control over the decisions that affect their communities, laying the foundation for sound governance and an improved quality of life for their members," Chief Darcy Bear said. "A self-government agreement will recognize the Whitecap Dakota First Nation as a government with the ability to create laws, authorities and empower our community members to break the cycle of dependence created by the Indian Act." This Framework Agreement marks the start of a process for determining Whitecap Dakota law-making powers, including how they will manage their resources, preserve their culture and build on their successes in economic development. As the next step in the process, the parties will begin negotiations of an Agreement-in-Principle. Whitecap Dakota First Nation is located approximately 26 km south of Saskatoon and has 562 members living on- and off-reserve.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

announced an investment of about \$700,000 to Miawpukek First Nation for water infrastructure upgrades and emergency management activities. Miawpukek First Nation was established as a reserve in 1987 and is located on the Island of Newfoundland. The community has 2,780 members, with an on-reserve population of 830 members. "The Government of Canada believes that by investing in infrastructure, we are building stronger First Nation communities and substantially improving the health and safety of residents," said Parliamentary Secretary Greg Rickford on behalf of Aboriginal Affairs Canada. "The projects will enable Miawpukek First Nation to meet its growing needs by providing quality water services and improving access to a major road within the community." As a result of this funding, two major projects will be completed. The East Brook Bridge, which was seriously damaged by flooding, will be replaced, and the existing water pumphouse will be upgraded. These upgrades, which include electrical and mechanical work, will provide continued water services to about 200 homes on reserve. Both projects are expected to be completed by March 31. "I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Government of Canada for its contribution to the continuous wellbeing of our community," said Chief Mi'sel Joe. "These infrastructure upgrades will not only improve our day-to-day lives, but will stimulate our local economy by creating new jobs and making our community more sustainable."

ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

National Chief Shawn A-in-chut Atleo expressed his support for the construction of all-weather roads to improve accessibility to and from remote First Nation communities, urging all levels of government to work with First Nations to ensure appropriate measures are taken when ice roads are not available. "Northern First Nation communities that rely on ice roads for supplies over the winter months only become more vulnerable with mild winter weather," said Atleo. "We support calls by First Nation leadership in Manitoba and Ontario for the construction of all-weather roads and other approaches that work for First Nations that better ensure transportation of food, fuel and other essential supplies and services year round." Chiefs from Manitoba declared a state of emergency when above normal temperatures over a few weeks delayed winter road construction in the region. Manitoba Keewatinowik Okimakanak Inc. (MKO) Grand Chief David Harper and a group of remote First Nation communities in northern Manitoba cited climate change and government inaction, calling for the federal government and Manitoba to work with First Nations to develop a contingency plan.

Debentures sold will fund First Nation's work

By Shari Narine
Windspeaker Contributor

OSOYOOS INDIAN BAND, B.C.

Certification from the First Nation Financial Management Board will allow the Osoyoos Indian Band to undertake development at a faster pace than if it had to solely rely on government funding.

"We can get funding from the open market at interest rates below what banks can give us," said Brian Titus, chief operating officer for the Osoyoos Indian Band Development Corp.

OIB, along with Songhees and Tzeachten, are the first First Nations to receive the certification. Although all three are located in British Columbia, Harold Calla, chair of the management board, said First Nations from across the country are coming on board.

Membertou First Nation in Atlantic Canada is one of the next five First Nations who will receive certification in the next

month or so. Calla anticipates 15 or 20 more First Nations to meet the criteria established by the board by the end of the year and another 20 the following year.

"It's a real opportunity for First Nations to access [dollars] that they need for economic development," said Calla.

The mandate of the board is set out by the First Nations Fiscal and Statistical Management Act. First Nations must meet stringent criteria established by the board to gain certification. That criteria, said Calla, is in keeping with the control framework for financial management that was developed after the spate of accounting scandals in the United States.

First Nations that meet the criteria demonstrate to the private sector that they are a decreased investment risk. These First Nations become borrowing members of the First Nation Finance Authority, an institution created under the management act. It is the authority that sells debentures and, in turn, lends the money to the certified First

Nation.

The advantage, said Calla, is that bands like Osoyoos can now borrow money at an interest rate of prime minus one instead of prime plus one and can also commit to long-term planning at a fixed interest rate.

"If you're borrowing a substantial amount of money, two per cent makes a big difference," said Calla, "and in some cases it makes projects viable."

Osoyoos will be taking full advantage of this new standing with work planned for infrastructure projects. Up to 400 units of individual housing is being planned over the next 10 years for the Canyon Desert golf resort and upgrades to its 45-hectare Senkulmen Business Park, which opened last October, will continue.

"We're actively pursuing a correctional facility with the government of British Columbia and this helps make us more attractive to do business with," said Titus.

Long term planning is

something First Nations have to embrace, said Calla, and having access to capital is essential.

"A lot of what we speak of when we go into communities is how they tie this initiative into their communities' objectives and opportunities," he said. "Many First Nations now need to consider doing these things well in advance of an opportunity arriving at their door."

It took OIB a year's worth of work to get certification from the board, said Titus. However, he noted that OIB also has ISO 9001 standing, which means the

band is in compliance with the International Standards Organization's quality management systems.

"First Nations have to show they are financially stable and able to continue in a viable manner. That is difficult for some, but not for all," said Titus. "It all comes down to good financial practises."

The board's access to capital on the open market for First Nations is unique.

"There is no other mechanism in the world for Aboriginal communities to access the capital market," said Calla.

Appeals Court says class-actions can proceed

By Shari Narine
Windspeaker Contributor

ST. JOHN'S, Nfld.

Newfoundland and Labrador residential school survivors who were excluded from the initial Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement (IRSSA) have been given the go-ahead by that province's Court of Appeal to launch a lawsuit against the federal government.

The ruling was delivered Dec. 21, 2011.

"It's good news for people who have been waiting for such a long time for a response from the court on this issue," said Dan Pottle, minister of finance with the Nunatsiavut government, which was established in 2005 as a regional Inuit government within the province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Pottle explained that when the IRSSA was signed in 2007, the Nunatsiavut government approached the federal government twice to lobby for the inclusion of the five residential schools that operated in the province.

"They would not go down that road," said Pottle. The Nunatsiavut government engaged a law firm to do further work on the subject. That information was turned over to Ahlstrom Wright Oliver and Cooper, a law firm in Sherwood Park, Alta. which was successful in taking the matter to the next level.

"We were certified, which means we can proceed as a class

action. It's pretty critical," said Ches Crosbie, a lawyer representing the Innu, Inuit and Métis claimants. Crosbie's firm is co-legal counsel with the Sherwood Park law firm.

Crosbie said there are five class action law suits that will go ahead, each representing schools located in Cartwright, Northwest River, St. Anthony, Nain and Makkovik. In total, there are 5,000 students and their relatives involved.

That the Newfoundland and Labrador Court of Appeal upheld the 2010 decision by the Newfoundland and Labrador Supreme Court is significant and could have an impact in other provinces.

"What we pleaded was negligence on the part of the government and also breach of fiduciary duty. They had a presence on committees of oversight that oversaw the delivery of funds," said Crosbie. "The federal government resisted the case on the basis that it had a different involvement with schools in Newfoundland than it did elsewhere."

To date, the IRSSA only includes schools in which Canada "was jointly or solely responsible for the operation of the residence and care of children," as stipulated in the IRSSA.

The federal government now must decide how to proceed.

"The department (of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada) is reviewing the decision in consultation with the Department of Justice, and

considering available options before determining the most appropriate next steps," wrote AANAC spokesperson Michelle Perron in an email to *Windspeaker*. "As this case is before the courts, it would be inappropriate to comment further."

Crosbie said the federal government could seek Leave to Appeal the decision to the Supreme Court of Canada or could begin discussions regarding a compensation package. Crosbie said at this point his clients are not convinced that accepting the Common Experience Payment (CEP) or the Independent Assessment Process that were negotiated as part of the IRSSA would be advantageous.

"Exactly what we would be looking for in way of a settlement is something we have to resolve amongst ourselves right now. There are some dissatisfactions with the way the global settlement process has worked out," said Crosbie.

Through the CEP, eligible survivors received \$10,000 for the first school year (or partial school year) of residence at one or more IRSSA-recognized residential schools and an additional \$3,000 for each subsequent school year. CEP applications are now closed except for those in extenuating circumstances. Applications are still being accepted for IAP (Independent Assessment Process), which recognizes residential school survivors for serious physical and sexual abuse. Application deadline is Sept. 19, 2012.

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STEVENS & COMPANY

Debate on land privatization should turn to rights implications

By Jennifer Ashawasegai
Windspeaker Contributor

OTTAWA

The House of Commons Finance Committee has recommended the privatization of reserve lands. The suggestion was made when the committee presented its pre-budget report before the holiday break. The committee thinks a policy such as this would help reduce poverty on First Nations.

The idea is not a new one, and has been kicked around for a decade or more and, to some, it hasn't been well thought out.

The idea was widely presented to the country by Prime Minister Stephen Harper's former advisor, Tom Flanagan, in two of his books, 'First Nations? Second Thoughts' and 'Beyond the Indian Act.' The idea was not very popular in Flanagan's first book, but he amended the idea to make it more palatable in his second.

And still there are big questions left to answer.

The First Nations community has analyzed the issue. It's been compared to the 1887 Dawes Act, south of the border. That act resulted in what's called a 'checkerboard effect' where pockets of land within reservations were sold off. Poverty existed there then, and continues to exist in some of our southern neighbors' communities.

During the debate, columnist Doug Cuthand wrote in the Star Phoenix last fall, that some First Nations land is coveted by land speculators, developers and others looking to profit, but not all of the land is so valuable. He argues that lands in remote areas aren't generally worth a lot.

Cuthand also writes, "Bands that have succeeded in large-scale development are generally closer to urban areas, and those mired in poverty are often far from any commercial centre."

And then there is legislation in place which accomplishes the same ends that the proponents of land privatization sell in their idea.

The First Nations Lands Management Act (FNLMA) allows community members under the act easier access to mortgages and enables more First Nation control over lands than under the Indian Act.

Chris Angeconeb, director of the Lands Advisory Board Resource Centre (which assists First Nations that have opted into the FNLMA) says, "A First Nations property ownership act would allow for First Nations lands to become fee simple with the underlying title belonging to the First Nation."

But, he says, there is a problem with that because yet another jurisdiction over land would be created. Angeconeb also says First Nation collective ownership over land is ignored by a land privatization proposal.

That's not the only problem with the idea. What about treaty rights?

John Rowinski, a lawyer based in Brooklin, Ont., is one of many who have sounded the alarm over the privatization idea. He wrote an article for the

magazine Lawyers Weekly back in 2010 saying that the federally proposed idea was "...premature and short-sighted."

In a January telephone interview, Rowinski pointed out that the issue around treaty rights hasn't been something he has heard a lot about in the debate. He says, "It's a huge red flag. Reserve land is protected in most of Canada by treaty, and those rights don't run so much with the people so much as they run with the land."

Rowinski questions, "So if some of that land is sold off or if it's mortgaged to an outside party, do those rights still apply? What are the tax implications?"

He doesn't have concrete answers to those questions and it leads to a more challenging discussion.

Rowinski says, "The question now is, are we further dissipating treaty rights and Aboriginal rights—Constitutionally and protected rights—by offering this?"

Perhaps the biggest question is, can this be done without a

Constitutional amendment?"

"Section 35 protects those Aboriginal and treaty rights and I don't think there's been that depth of analysis, at least in the commentary that I have seen on this issue," Rowinski added.

The issue around treaty and Aboriginal rights within privatization is also difficult for Angeconeb to analyze.

"You have Aboriginal rights outside of reserve lands, and I think the idea that once you privatize ownership of lands, I don't think you're going to have the same kinds of ...territorial rights happening. So, I don't think you would have the ...ability to say companies have to talk to you outside of your fee-simple lands."

The most succinct statement about land privatization belongs to Cuthand, who puts it simply: "Indian land is not real estate. It is our homeland, and to privatize it would be disastrous. This land is a legacy from our forefathers and we must turn it over to the next generation."

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The latest example of cultural appropriation

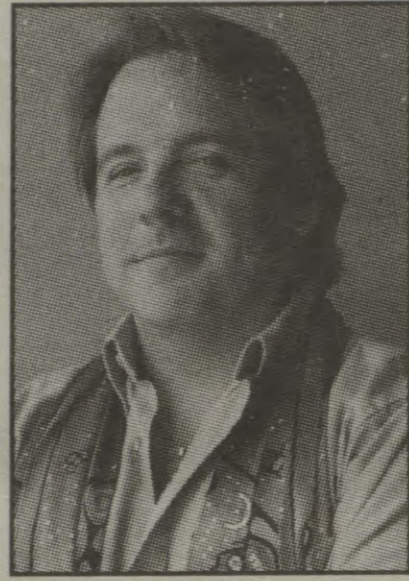
One of the big stories of last year was the occupation of a number of urban parks and public spaces all across North America to protest the fact that the vast majority of wealth and power is limited to the top one per cent of society.

Thus all those chants of "We are the 99 per cent" we heard on the news.

That's hardly a shocker to most First Nations communities. After the economic collapse of 2008, and slow financial recovery occurring in most developed nations, these people were understandably protesting and trying to shake the establishment up a bit, letting the Powers-That-Be know the vast population of North America were not amused.

Reaganomics back in the 80s taught us about the questionable concept of the 'trickle down theory', where wealth supposedly runs downhill like water through the various social levels from the top, benefiting all.

Unfortunately, economic chaos and poverty tends to mostly affect those on the mid and lower levels while those at the top may possibly feel sorry for those on the bottom. Like wealth and poverty, pity seems to



THE URBANE INDIAN

Drew Hayden Taylor

run downhill too. You didn't see too many of the protesters and occupiers concerned about the welfare of those on Wall or Bay Street.

However, I am getting off topic.

There was one unusual practice I noticed that came out of all those park occupations across the country, and in some cases, the world. I think it begs some sort of comment. Therefore, I would like to introduce the concept of the 'Indigenous habitation trickle down theory' which states, if you have any group of non-Native people protesting another group of primarily non-Native people for a prolonged period of time, there is a good chance one or several of them will attempt to establish occupancy and

respectability via the appropriation and use of some form of Indigenous lodging.

I am, of course, referring to the inexplicable appearances of tipis at many of these occupation sites. And with them, of all things, a unique structure known as yurts.

For those not familiar with Turkic nomads from the steppes of Central Asia, that's where the yurt comes from. It's often confused with the similar Mongolian ger. What these had to do with the larger issue being challenged is beyond me. The more of these Indigenous erections that I saw, the more I expected to see.

How long would it be until a Navaho hogan suddenly appeared by a subway line or an Aztec temple near the hot dog

vendor? If the occupations had lasted into the winter, I am sure it was only a matter of time before igloos would have sprouted up down by the Starbucks.

Why do these people have to drag us, and more importantly, the domiciles we traditionally used to inhabit, into their rumblings?

I should add that we lived in those domiciles until we were told by the ancestors of these same people to grow up and get civilized. And nothing says civilization like a split level duplex with carpeting and a breakfast nook. Unless of course you live in Attawapiskat; then it's particle board walls, black mold and toilets consisting of a bucket.

Again, I digress.

What I am curious about is why don't these people recreate their own traditional lodgings instead of appropriating from those cultures they colonized and subsequently called savages? For instance, wouldn't it have been a little more logical to see a Viking longhouse at that park in downtown Toronto? Or perhaps a Tudor castle in Montreal? A Roman settlement in Calgary?

Instead they pick tipis and yurts. Very puzzling. A little

cultural identity crisis perhaps?

Yes, I understand tipis and yurts may be a little easier to put together than say a log house cabin, especially in an urban environment. (Picture that log cabin made from telephone poles.) But just because something is easier doesn't necessarily make it right. It should be pointed out that I know very few Native people who, when they are pissed off at the Band Office, suddenly start building a coliseum or a Stonehenge. We're just not that kind of people.

What's the answer to all this? I'm not sure. If this is some sort of attempt to show solidarity with Native people and include them in their struggles, then bravo. Thanks for thinking of us. But perhaps a better way of showing this support would be to send all these tipis and yurts all the way up to Attawapiskat for some much needed shelter this winter.

Granted, tipis don't provide a substantial amount of protection against -30 degree weather, but they would be a lot more productive and useful than in a city park.

Think of that as some sort of a trickle-down theory.

Screaming matches dominate council meetings

Dear Auntie:

I was recently elected to council, and while I feel very proud to serve my community, I am having regrets about putting my name forward in the first place. Every council meeting is a screaming match. Nothing gets done without tensions boiling over. This is not how I was taught to behave. I was taught to listen more than talk, and speak quietly and deliberately, knowing that each word has the power to help or do harm. I feel sick to my stomach every time I walk into the band office. I'm thinking I'm not cut out for a political position.

Signed,

Not Up For The Challenge

Dear Not Up For The Challenge:

Congratulations on taking up the challenge to be a leader for your community. Leadership roles will reveal a whole side to how our Indigenous communities continue to struggle with being forced to use a foreign governance system that contradicts traditional customary laws. Indigenous leadership takes courage.

One elder I met in my travels described how our leaders risk a bullet in the back from the white man and arrows in the chest from our own people. The Western hierarchy carries an attitude "Might is Right" that Indigenous communities have been forced to endure and learned to replicate.

Residential school formed power-over relationships with authority structured around who has power and who does not. Keeping our people in a state of being cared for was a Eurocentric



DEAR AUNTIE

By J'net AyAy Qwa Yak Sheelth Cavanagh

way of dismissing and denying traditional approaches to raising children and bringing up respectful community members.

Leaders were not elected in traditional times. This was part of what the *Indian Act* imposed on our communities. I was astonished to learn from university the first "chiefs" in Indigenous communities across Canada were white men to *teach the uncivilized Indian* how to govern himself.

Imposing a uniform *one-size-fits-all* governance model was an attempt to replace diverse leadership customs among Indigenous nations in Canada. This may have involved leadership roles passed on through your family. Another example would be that nations had leaders appointed by grandmothers.

The *Council Meeting screaming match where nothing gets done* reflects how poorly the residential school system raised our children.

This all points to *divide and conquer* tactics of how the *Indian Act* has systemically created and reinforces a situation constructed to get Indigenous peoples to forget their *savage ways* and not work together. This sad and dysfunctional state stands as a reminder of how torn apart our

communities have become.

However, your traditional knowledge can support your leadership journey and go a long way to rebuilding relationships. Perhaps you have, or can organize, an Elders Advisory Circle to explore cultural options for conducting meetings. If you have the budget or opportunity to seek funds, perhaps hire a facilitator and host a Teambuilding Retreat to develop a strategic plan and establish a code of conduct with Elders input. This can blend traditional and Western models for council meetings. This kind of retreat can be a way to revisit traditional values of respect and good behavior that results in positive action to better the community.

Lovingly, Auntie.

Dear Auntie:

While Christmas is usually a very happy time in my family, this year we lost our father just weeks before. My sisters and I are trying to cope, but dad's passing has Mom reeling. She actually looks scared and confused. They had been together for 57 years. How do I help her when I'm still dealing with my own grief?

Signed,

A Heavy, Heavy Heart

Dear Heavy, Heavy Heart:

My candles were lit over the winter break for those who have passed on and will be missed forevermore. While the holidays are commercially promoted as happy moments of wishes coming true, this is often not reality.

There is grief research that suggests making alternative plans for first time holidays, anniversaries and birthdays without the ones we love who have passed away takes the stress off of going around with a *business as usual* attitude. Taking time to honor grief and loss that comes with memories of those who chopped our wood for us, gave us the pep talks we needed, faithful hugs, phone calls or shared jokes to make the moment feel lighter to comfort us, does not happen overnight. The losses may not always be evident once someone we love dies, as our first year without our beloved is bound to be chock full of memories.

Some families have cultural options and rituals your mom may already know about or may be willing to consider as part of her wellness plan. For example, among Nuu-chah-nulth where I am from on the West Coast of Vancouver Island, relatives will put all photos of the deceased away for a year.

Some may find comfort from their faith and seek support from the church, and grieving support groups are often available. For those who are more private, they may prefer a quiet tea and visit with family, a community support worker or another widow or widower. Our demanding adult lives will feel more chaotic seeing

our parents looking *scared and confused* when we also need comforting from the same loss, and it will force a role reversal where we have to look out for our parent.

Being reminded of our own mortality is tender and brings up feelings of uncertainty. It is important to be gentle with each other and also vital to care for yourself. I find the first stages of grieving is like being on *autopilot* and living from task to task to get through each day. Keeping ourselves busy or shutting down are often the two extremes until shock of the loss wears off.

I recall one Nuu-chah-nulth granny who was teaching me how to cedar bark weave. One day about a year after her husband had died she was flopped on the couch, and a voice in her head demanded she get up and weave! And she did and found it helped her get her life back on track.

All the best as your family finds some direction and support as you work through your grief and loss.

Lovingly, Auntie

Have a question for Dear Auntie? Then please send it via email to: letters@ammsa.com

Check out Dear Auntie on facebook @ AskDearAuntie. You can read previous questions and answers or ask new questions of your own.

Editor's Note: The Ask Auntie column is published for readers' entertainment and consideration only. The opinions expressed are those of the author and are not necessarily endorsed by Windspeaker or the Aboriginal Multi-Media Society.



RAVEN'S EYE

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Drilling ban should be made permanent

By SHAUNA LEWIS
Raven's Eye Writer

TERRACE

First Nations and environmental groups opposed to coalbed methane gas exploration in the Sacred Headwaters of northern British Columbia are demanding that the existing moratorium on drilling in the region be extended indefinitely.

"Four years ago, the B.C. government listened to northwestern communities and pushed pause on drilling in the Sacred Headwaters. Now it's up to Premier [Christy] Clark to follow that path to its logical conclusion," said Shannon McPhail, executive director of the Skeena Watershed Conservation Coalition.

"A permanent ban would indicate to local communities, First Nations and the rest of British Columbia that the government is committed to establishing a truly responsible industry," she added.

But a spokesperson for the Minister of Energy and Mines, says that "no extension has been made at this time and the terms of the original agreement remain in place."

"The recent extension of the period of inactivity in the Klappan recognized more time was required to formulate an understanding of how, if any, natural gas development will occur in the area. Discussions are ongoing with First Nations and Shell on this matter," the spokesperson added.

In 2008, prompted by strong regional opposition to a gas extraction program, the province placed a four-year moratorium on Shell Canada's plan to drill in an area known as the Klappan Basin.

The Klappan or 'The Sacred Headwaters' as it is known to the First Nations of the area, is located in the remote region of northwest British Columbia about 600 kilometers north of Terrace. The area is in the heart of pristine wilderness and home to herds of land animals as well as many species of salmon. It is the birthplace of the Skeena, Nass and Stikine rivers, all home to a majority of the BC salmon stocks.

But the moratorium is set to expire in 2012 and environmental groups say that unless the province extends the ban indefinitely, there is a risk of irreparable damage to the area.

"What happens in the Sacred Headwaters will determine the image of natural gas development in B.C.," said Karen Tam Wu, senior conservation campaigner with Forest Ethics.

The Sacred Headwaters has made the BC Outdoor Recreation Council's "Top 12 Endangered Rivers List" two years in a row.

Environmental groups have formed a campaign against Shell and the BC government to protect the area and 60,000 people have signed a petition opposing its plans.

Brian Huntington, associate director of the Skeena Watershed Conservation Coalition, says an indefinite moratorium against drilling in the Sacred Headwaters would not only protect the environment, it would also preserve First Nations culture.

He said saving the Headwaters is about protecting "the integrity of the habitat, and with that comes protection of the culture."

Threats to annual fish stocks are enormous, he said, explaining, "Wild salmon cross culture boundaries and unite people."

"This is currently an intact, unfragmented ecosystem," Huntington says of the Klappan.

"It's all functioning naturally." If the drilling gets the green light Huntington predicts the environmental turmoil caused by the creation of wells, access roads and pipelines would be monumental.

"It's an enormous amount of disturbance," he explained. "And when you have such a large disturbance across the landscape it changes the way the water flows," he said, referring to the effects development would have on the future of BC wild salmon stocks.

"Our organization's intent in this campaign is to empower people and bring communities in the northwest together to create a sustainable future for the wild

salmon stock," he explained.

"The Tahltan people want to protect that landscape," Huntington added. "Our work is driven to support their wishes," he said.

Marie Quock, chief of the Iskut band, the Tahltan community closest to the proposed exploration, is backing environmental groups and says an indefinite moratorium must be placed on the Sacred Headwaters.

"It's the area where we have all our cultural activities happen," Quock said, adding that the area is also home to many Tahltan seasonal cultural camps.

Sustaining the wild salmon stocks is a top priority for the First Nation and talks among the Tahltan leadership are ongoing as they continue "working together for a plan to stop this."

The Tahltan First Nation has had an active role in opposing the issue of coal-bed methane drilling on their land.

In 2004 Shell Canada received

the provincial land tenure to explore for coalbed methane in the Klappan Basin. The province granted the tenure after Shell signed a memorandum of understanding with the leaders of the Tahltan First Nation. But strong community opposition to the drilling resulted in a change in leadership and the Tahltan began protesting and blockading roads shortly after. The blockade saw Tahltan community members arrested. Many of those were Elders.

But while groups opposed to drilling lobby together, Shell Canada spokesperson, Stephen Doolan said the company has no current plans to pursue exploratory drilling in the Sacred Headwaters.

"Shell is not conducting any exploration activities in the Klappan," he said. "Shell and the government of British Columbia agreed to a period of inactivity until 2012. Currently Shell is focused on working with the BC government to engage with

stakeholders during this pause in activity and we have made no decisions regarding the path forward when the period of inactivity concludes," said Doolan.

"Shell will continue to engage with the government, First Nation communities and other stakeholders to develop solutions to address concerns that have been raised," he added.

But First Nations and environmental groups say the only solution to saving the Sacred Headwaters is no drilling at all.

"Our goal is that by the end of the moratorium a means of permanent protection is in place," said Huntington.

The Sacred Headwaters is an unacceptable place for industrial activity," he stressed.

"What we need to do is support our government to protect the Sacred Headwaters from industrial pursuits and invest in the wild salmon economy," he said.



The BC Junior All Native Basketball Championships will be staged in Port Alberni from March 18 to March 23, hosted by the defending boys champs the Homiss Wolves. Organizers are expecting about 50 teams to take part. Already registered are defending girls champs Sylix of the Okanagan Nation, which will be looking for a three-peat. Action will take place in three gyms in the community. About 1,500 people are expected to attend. To register a team or for more information, go to the Junior All Native Website at www.jrallnativetournament.com

Raven's Eye: Special Section providing news from BC & Yukon

THE COUNCIL OF YUKON FIRST NATIONS (CYFN)

in Canada are looking for more say over the approval of mining projects in the region. Grand Chief Ruth Massie said the CYFN will not sign off on the current review of the Yukon Environmental and Socio-Economic Assessment Act unless First Nations are made full partners in the process. "What we are basically seeking as First Nations is equal participation in the decision making process of the YESA Act. Presently it goes to the YESA Board, the approvals go to the Yukon government minister bypassing Yukon First Nations, although we are asked to comment on all of the projects, which has been very, very overwhelming for the Yukon First Nations." The applications are piling up and more dollars are needed to help with the process of dealing with them. "Tr'ondek First Nation in Dawson City has been absolutely overwhelmed with the applications coming in their door," said Massie. "I know it's well over a couple of hundred applications. And when you have one staff member trying to review and give adequate responses to the application, it's very, very time consuming."

THE TSAWWASSEN FIRST NATION

has voted in favor of the construction of two malls in Delta. "(The malls) are a major part of our economic development plans," said Chief Kim Baird. "We've done comprehensive land use planning around to try and create economic opportunities that through revenues, taxes and employment opportunities will contribute toward sustainability for our community." One mall will be a 600,000 square foot outdoor facility and the other will be a 1.2 million square foot fashion centre. The projects must go through a feasibility study, including environmental and transportation. Baird hopes some of the groundwork can start this summer, with the malls expected to open in the fall of 2015.



Chief Kim Baird.

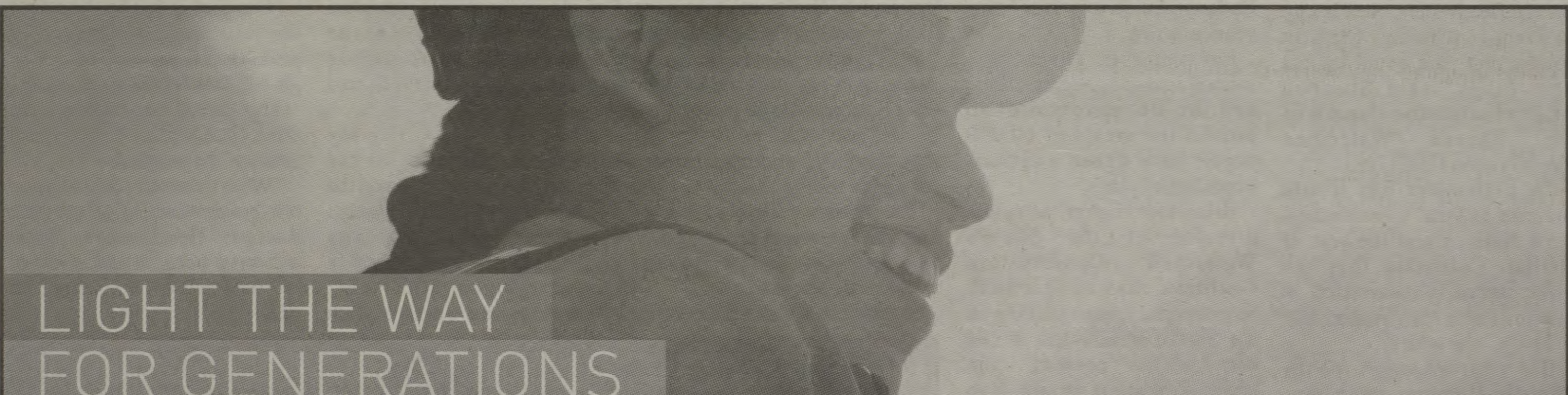
PHOTO: PROVIDED

PROMISES MADE IN THE YUKON

140 years ago cannot be enforced by the court. The Yukon Supreme Court decided there is no legal obligation to negotiate unsettled land claims in the territory, despite an edict that would have compensated First Nations for lands lost. The Ross River Dena have been in court for 10 years trying to get Ottawa to live up to that edict from 1870 in which the Yukon and parts of the Northwest Territories were made a part of Canada. The edict included orders to compensate First Nations for the lands they were losing. Supreme Court Justice Leigh Gower said the Dena interpretation of the edict ignores the historical context of the order. He said it was up to the discretion of Parliament when and how Ottawa negotiates claims, and the courts had no jurisdiction in the matter.

TEAM BC IS SEEKING TOP

Aboriginal hockey players and coaching staff for the 2012 National Aboriginal Hockey Championships. The Aboriginal Sport, Recreation and Physical Activity Partners Council have announced details of the Player Selection Camp and the members of the Coaching Staff for Team BC's participation in the 2012 National Aboriginal Hockey Championships to be held May 6 to 12 in Saskatoon. Following Team BC's promising results at the 2011 championship, the Partners Council's Provincial Hockey Committee has re-appointed members of the 2011 Team BC Coaching staff for 2012. Applications for the vacant female team assistant coach position are being accepted. Team BC tryouts will be conducted at a three-day Player Selection Camp where coaching staff will evaluate and select the province's top Aboriginal male and female hockey players to represent British Columbia at the 2012 NAHC. The Player Selection Camp will be held March 30 to April 1 at the Shulus Community Arena located in Lower Nicola Indian Band (Merritt).



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Gitxsan steps back from pipeline agreement

By SHAUNA LEWIS
Raven's Eye Writer

Hazelton

The Gitxsan First Nation has reversed a decision to participate in a controversial oil pipeline project that would have generated \$7 million for the band.

Gitxsan hereditary chiefs voted 78 per cent in favor of withdrawing from the Northern Gateway pipeline agreement during a meeting held on their territory Jan. 17.

"The chiefs reviewed the agreement with Enbridge and it seemed the risks were greater than the benefits," explained Beverly Clifton-Percival, negotiator with the Gitxsan Treaty Society [GTS].

GTS chief negotiator, Elmer Derrick, had signed on to the \$5.5 billion proposed pipeline project with Calgary-based Oil Company, Enbridge Inc. on Dec. 2, 2011.

Enbridge has offered all Aboriginal communities affected by its project—including the Gitxsan—a share in 10 per cent of the pipeline's ownership, as well as \$1 billion in community development money.

But the deal caused a firestorm of controversy among Gitxsan band members and leaders in Hazelton and Kitimaat Village, with many band members and hereditary chiefs claiming they weren't properly consulted about the deal and that traditional protocol was ignored.

Community frustration and concern following the agreement fuelled a protest among the band members, as a few dozen people set up camp outside the GTS office in Hazelton for weeks while calling for the resignation of Derrick and other negotiators involved in the deal.

But while the Gitxsan First Nation has publicly denounced the pipeline project, they are only one of many Aboriginal communities entangled in the controversial issue.

Enbridge claims that 40 per

cent of First Nations along the proposed 1,200 km pipeline corridor have quietly signed on to the deal.

However, critics of the project say Enbridge is refusing to announce the names of those First Nations.

Calls to Enbridge were not returned by press time.

But while the company claims to have the support of some First Nations in B.C., those opposed to the deal have been participating in the lengthy hearing process, which involves a joint review panel of representatives from the National Energy Board and the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency. The pipeline review hearings, which began Jan. 11, is expected to wind through communities in B.C. and Alberta, providing a public platform where people can express their views about the pipeline project.

Technical hearings are also set for the fall. The entire process is slated to end in Spring 2013.

Panel discussions are planned following the hearing, after which the federal government will have the final say on the project.

The province says it is also monitoring the panel closely.

"We're watching the national environmental review process as it works its way through. We'll be in a position in British Columbia to have a real, meaningful debate about it once all the facts are on the table about the impacts for British Columbia and the benefits for British Columbia and for Canada as well," said a spokesperson for the BC Minister of Energy and Mines.

The Northern Gateway plan would increase Canadian oil exports shipped by tanker from B.C. ports to China and other Pacific Rim countries. It proposes to link the Alberta oil sands with the west coast of British Columbia by cutting a path through the Great Bear Rainforest.

But First Nations dependent on the rich environment of their

traditional territories for cultural and sustenance purposes say they don't want the project moving forward under any circumstances. They say the cost of oil spills on their ancestral lands and in coastal water shipping lanes are far too great.

Many political leaders have also stepped up to address the controversial proposal.

In an open letter dated Jan. 9, Natural Resources Minister Joe Oliver claimed that the review process was being hijacked by grassroots environmentalists and foreign special interest groups wanting to undermine Canada's national economy. The claim was also echoed by Premier Stephen Harper.

"Unfortunately, there are environmental and other radical groups that would seek to block this opportunity to diversify our trade. Their goal is to stop any major project no matter what the cost to Canadian families in lost jobs and economic growth," said Oliver.

In response, BC Green Party leader Elizabeth May called Oliver's statements "disturbing" and "inaccurate."

"The idea that First Nations, conservation groups, and individuals opposed to the Northern Gateway pipeline are opposed to all forestry, mining, hydro-electric and gas is not supported by the facts," May stated in a letter.

Most disturbing, said May, "is the description of opposition to the Northern Gateway pipeline as coming from 'environmental and other radical groups. Nowhere in your letter do you mention First Nations. (I notice you mention 'Aboriginal communities,' but First Nations require the appropriate respect that they represent a level of government, not merely individuals within communities.)"

"The federal government has a constitutional responsibility to respect First Nations sovereignty and protect their interests," added May.

some bands have formed powerful alliances like the 'Save The Fraser: Gathering of Nations.' This is a group made up of over 60 BC band chiefs whose goal it is to protect the Fraser River watershed and oppose the Northern Gateway Pipeline project.

The group circulated a petition titled 'Save the Fraser Declaration' which has garnered the signatures of dozens of BC First Nation Chiefs.

Chief Art Adolph of the Xaxli'p First Nation, whose territories cover the middle and southern parts of the Fraser watershed, has signed the petition.

"An oil spill into the Fraser River could be devastating for our people," he said in a statement.

"Since time immemorial the river provides for us, and we have an obligation to protect it," Adolph added.

"The Enbridge pipeline would risk an oil spill into our rivers and lands that would destroy our food supply, our livelihoods and our cultures," agreed Chief Larry Nooski of Nadleh Whut'en First Nation, a community west of Prince George. Nooski also signed the declaration.

The proposed pipeline route would go through 38 kilometers of the band's traditional territory, Nooski told Windspeaker.

Nooski said he, along with other First Nations leaders in the area, had a hand in creating the pipeline petition.

"We decided to do something rather than sitting back," he said. "The declaration is based on First Nation traditional knowledge and laws."

"Our laws do not permit crude oil pipelines in our territories. This project isn't going anywhere," he said.

Nooski said "it is up to individual First Nations if they want to sign on to the 'Save The Fraser Declaration' or join with Enbridge." But he suspects momentum will continue to grow among First Nations opposing the plan.

"There is strength in numbers and the more First Nations begin to realize the dangers of the Enbridge pipeline, there are more First Nations that have concerns with the project," he said.

But besides obvious potential environmental concerns, Nooski said it's "Enbridge's inability to answer questions," regarding the hazards of a potential oil spill occurring in the area, that worry him the most.

"We rely heavily on the waters here for fishing," explained Nooski. "If there's a [oil] leak the impacts could last for generations," he said.

“Whether it be a pipeline or a mine, First Nations have real rights (and) those rights must be recognized when it comes to any development in this country.”

Shawn Atleo, national chief for the Assembly of First Nations

"These groups threaten to hijack our regulatory system to achieve their radical ideological agenda. They seek to exploit any loophole they can find, stacking public hearings with bodies to ensure that delays kill good projects. They use funding from foreign special interest groups to undermine Canada's national economic interest."

May also stressed the importance of not expediting the process of a hearing on the matter.

Shawn Atleo, national chief for the Assembly of First Nations, repeated May's statements when he told reporters last month that Canada must expel the notion that First Nations are merely passive bystanders when it comes to developments affecting their territories.

"We need to move away from the notion that we are only stakeholders when it comes to major projects," he told a news conference in Ottawa.

"Whether it be a pipeline or a mine, First Nations have real rights (and) those rights must be recognized when it comes to any development in this country," he stated.

Atleo also asserted that First Nations have "the right to free, prior and informed consent" over projects affecting their territory.

As the number of First Nations in opposition of the pipeline continues to grow,

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National Aboriginal Awards coming to Vancouver

Vancouver – The National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation will honor this year's recipients of the National Aboriginal Achievement Awards in a special gala event on Feb. 24 at the Queen Elizabeth Theatre in Vancouver. The awards celebrate excellence in the Indigenous community and the limitless potential that Indigenous people represent.

The awards recognize the highest level of achievement and provide role models for Indigenous youth.

The 2012 National Aboriginal Achievement Award recipients are Candace Sutherland of Manitoba who receives the Youth Award, Earl Cook of Manitoba, whose Youth Award will be bestowed posthumously, Adam Beach of Manitoba, awarded in the Arts category, and Chief Victor Buffalo of Alberta, the recipient in Business and Commerce.

Elder Dave Courchene Jr. of

Manitoba receives his award in Culture, Heritage and Spirituality. Dr. Leona Makokis of Alberta wins in the Education category and Richard Hardy of British Columbia receives an award for contribution in Environment and Natural Resources.

Dr. Janet Smylie of Ontario receives an award in the Health category. Violet Ford of Newfoundland and Labrador wins in Law and Justice. Richard Wagamese of Ontario is the recipient in the Media and Communications category.

Leona Aglukkaq of Nunavut receives the award for Politics. Grand Chief Edward John of British Columbia wins also in the category of Politics. Minnie Grey of Quebec wins in the Public Service category.

Richard Peter of British Columbia wins in Sports and Senator Gerry St. Germain of Manitoba will receive the Lifetime Achievement Award.



Federal Health Minister Leona Aglukkaq is a recipient of a Aboriginal Achievement Award in the Politics category.



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THE BC JOBS PLAN

Trust, relationship need to be rebuilt
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Aboriginal people account for almost
three-quarters of new HIV cases
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Special section providing Aboriginal news from Saskatchewan



PHOTO: PROVIDED

FNUC signs agreement with Chilean university

The First Nations University of Canada president Doyle Anderson (right) signed an international exchange agreement with the Rector of the Universidad Catolica De Temuco, Alberto Vasquez. The UCT, a university in Chile, believes in civic engagement which is expressed through involvement in integrated sustainable rural development to meet the region's social, cultural, and development needs. This is the 35th international exchange agreement held by the FNUC to advance education and community development for Aboriginal people throughout the world.

George Gordon sues provincial, federal governments

By SHARI NARINE
Sage Contributing Editor

GEORGE GORDON FIRST NATION

The George Gordon First Nation is accusing the federal and provincial governments of not negotiating in good faith during the recent Treaty Land Entitlement Settlement Agreement process.

"While the George Gordon First Nation was at the negotiating table with Canada and Saskatchewan, and immediately following the conclusion of the George Gordon Treaty Land Entitlement Settlement, entitling them to acquire reserve lands and minerals, the Saskatchewan government proceeded to dispose of 100 per cent of all of the potash resources rights for exploration and development to companies in and around the George Gordon reserve such that, in effect, there is no valuable land left for selection," said Jeffrey R. W. Rath, an Alberta-based lawyer, who is representing the First Nation.

"Once Saskatchewan in effect disposed of, by lease, the

underlying crown mineral title, it obviously changes the economics of surface ownership such that these lands, that would have been available to George Gordon at \$500 or \$600 an acre aren't available at all now," said Rath.

George Gordon First Nation is now suing both levels of government for \$10 billion in loss of potash revenue. That figure, said Rath, was ascertained by expert economists.

"The pleading is \$10 billion or such other amount as may be proven at trial," said Rath, who noted that George Gordon Chief Glen Pratt believes that dollar tag is low. "In trial we would succeed in proving that the damage is even greater than that."

In a written statement, Pratt said, "As a people we are sick and tired of being cheated out of the wealth that rightly belongs to us under our treaty and Canadian and international law."

Rath contends that the provincial government needed to consult with the George Gordon First Nation before disposing of the mineral rights.

"What the Government of Saskatchewan forgets is constitutionally, and this is also underpinning the claim, under the (Natural Resources Transfer Agreement), they didn't get absolute control of lands and resources in the province of Saskatchewan. What they got was the ability to 'manage these lands subject to pre-existing trusts and agreements' and the courts have made it clear ... that the treaties form pre-existing trusts and agreements," said Rath.

However, the Saskatchewan government doesn't see it that way.

"We're confident in the province's constitutional authority to be able to manage and control the natural resources of the province," said Linsay Rabyj, communications director at Saskatchewan Justice.

Under the NRTA, brought into force in 1930, Canada transferred to Saskatchewan all Crown lands, minerals and other natural resources within the province, subject to a number of conditions, including that Saskatchewan provide unoccupied Crown

lands if Canada needs land in order to fulfil its obligations under Treaties.

While the resources may be an issue with the province, Rath said the federal government is being included in the law suit because the George Gordon First Nation TLE, which was signed in 2008, doesn't provide enough land for band members. While negotiations with George Gordon were ongoing, the federal government passed Bill C3 in response to Sharon McIvor's case, which allowed second generation Indians to claim status. Including this additional membership increases George Gordon's population by one-quarter to one-third, said Rath.

"The second generation cut off people weren't counted as part of the equity formula. Lands for these people remain outstanding business under the equity formula," he said.

Rath believes most First Nations in Saskatchewan are in a similar position as George Gordon.

"The Government of Saskatchewan is so arrogant in terms of how they treat First

Nations people and First Nations rights," he said.

The next step in the lawsuit is for both the provincial and federal governments to file statements of defence.

"Our position will be outlined in our Statement of Defence, which will be filed with the court in due course," said Michelle Perron, spokesperson for Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, in an email response to *Windspeaker*. "As this is a legal matter it would be inappropriate to comment further."

"We will be defending this lawsuit vigorously," said Rabyj.

Rath said the time frame for cases of this kind to make it to court is anywhere from two to five years.

"At the end of the day whether George Gordon ends up owning and operating a potash mine or the Government of Saskatchewan has to stroke a cheque in the billions of dollars for what they did, it doesn't matter to us. But ultimately, that's what we're dealing with," said Rath.



PHOTO: ROY POGORZELSKI

Students consider future work options

Students took advantage of a one day career fair held Jan. 25 in the atrium of the First Nations University of Canada. Companies and organizations that took part included the police, Canadian military, Shell Canada, Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food, and the provincial government.

Second vote scheduled for Muskowekwan

Muskowekwan Band membership will be returning to the polls on Feb. 25 to vote on Treaty Land Entitlement designation. If favourable, the action will designate mineral rights to the Crown which in turn would enable Canada to issue a mineral lease to Muskowekwan Resources Ltd. Muskowekwan Resources, a wholly owned company of the First Nation, holds the mineral rights in trust. In 2010, a joint venture agreement was signed between Encanto Potash Corp. and Muskowekwan First Nation, in which Encanto would put up the money for exploration while the First Nation received royalties, which are expected to run between \$50-\$60 million annually. Muskowekwan will also receive preferential employment and contracting opportunities. The second vote was forced when not enough eligible voters came out to the polls on Nov. 26. The second vote requires a simple majority to allow the designation to go ahead. Aboriginal and Northern Affairs Canada officials will be on the First Nation to monitor the vote.

North Battleford shelter faces closure

Money woes are looking as if the emergency shelter at the Indian and Métis Friendship Centre in North Battleford will be closing soon. The CBC reported the shelter is working on a "shoestring budget of scraped-up cash and donations." Most nights the multi-purpose room sleeps six or seven on mats. On some nights that number creeps up to 16. The Indian and Métis Friendship Centre has been running the temporary emergency shelter for the past two winters. North Battleford Mayor Ian Hamilton is determined to find a way to keep the shelter open for another month and is still working on a solution.

NWMO process continues

English River First Nation has moved on to Step 3 of the Nuclear Waste Management Organization's Adaptive Phased Management project, which is the creation, development and construction of a Deep Geologic Repository for the long-term management of spent nuclear waste. The first phase of Step 3 includes "more socioeconomic studies to assess the potential income of the repository on the community in terms of jobs or challenges to be managed." The second phase will include more scientific and technological studies to explore the safety aspects, "then we will do further study on community wellbeing (and) effects on the community." Three Saskatchewan communities and nine Ontario communities have expressed interest in being home to the nuclear waste storage facility.

Two candidates so far for MNS

Alex Maurice of Beauval is the first person to officially challenge incumbent Robert Doucette as head of the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan. The two men are the only candidates vying for the position. Doucette took over at the helm of the MNS in 2007. Elections will take place May 30.

TRC hosting community hearings

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission has begun hosting community hearings leading up to the fourth national event, to take place June 21-24 in Saskatoon. The first hearing was held in Regina at the First Nations University of Canada from Jan. 16-18. Other community hearings took place in Key First Nation (Jan. 20-22) and Prince Albert (Jan. 31-Feb. 2). Hearings will also be held in Pelican Narrows (February 13-14), Stony Rapids (Feb. 16-17), Onion Lake (April 3-5), Fort Qu'Appelle (May 14-15), Buffalo Narrows (May 17-18) and La Ronge (June 5-7). Dates have yet to be announced for North Battleford, Beauval, and Île-à-la-Crosse hearings.

New Environmental Code criticized by FSIN

The Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations is concerned about the new Saskatchewan Environmental Code and the review process attached to it which was announced by the Minister of Environment on Jan. 11. "The new Environmental Code will give industry a free pass on assessing the environmental impacts of their own resource development projects. This makes no sense," said FSIN Vice Chief Bobby Cameron in a news release. The old law required a natural resource developer to get a permit for every aspect of the development. Under the new law, the resource developer can proceed further down the stages of their development without close scrutiny.

Federal funding for drug treatment programs

The federal government is providing funding to support two new substance abuse treatment programs based out of the University of Saskatchewan. One program is an intervention workshop offered to communities free-of-charge focused on the healing journeys of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit women as they were treated for drug abuse. The second program is a province-wide initiative for all Saskatchewan residents, with people invited to share how Aboriginal culture has helped them on their journey healing from addictions. Funding for the two projects comes from the federal government through the Saskatchewan Ministry of Health Drug Treatment Funding Program.

Culling of dogs called off

Initial plans in early January to cull stray dogs who were forming packs and becoming aggressive on the Lac La Ronge Indian Band were called off. Chief Tammy Cook-Season issued a statement saying the band would work with the La Ronge-based group Northern Animal Rescue to bring the situation under control. A plan is being worked out where an animal control officer will pick up the dogs and turn them over to the rescue group.

Bear recipient of Saskatchewan Order of Merit

Darcy Bear, Chief of the Whitecap Dakota First Nation, was one of nine people to be bestowed with the province's highest honour, the Saskatchewan Order of Merit. Bear's goal is to free the community from a cycle of dependence

on the federal government and has been working toward creating a strong economic environment for the First Nation. One result of this action has been the development of the Dakota Dunes Resort, Golf Links and Casino. Bear has also taken dramatic steps to improve the accountability, transparency and fiscal responsibility of his administration. "We can proudly show our audit to the financial institution; to business partners; to our community members, and it's allowed us to open our doors for all kinds of business activity," he said.

Star Blanket presented to school board member

Roy Challis, with the Living Sky School Division board, was presented with the 2011 Saskatchewan School Boards Association Award of Distinction. He was also presented with a Star Blanket in recognition of his commitment to improving outcomes for First Nations and Métis students in Saskatchewan. "Roy's time as president saw a major change in direction as the association worked towards putting direction, ownership and authority back into the hands of the membership," said SSBA president Sandi Urban-Hall. "In addition to engaging the membership, Roy was also a leading force in supporting and advocating for First Nations and Métis education. His contributions at home have been equally impressive."

Recognition for resuming education

Darcy Joseph Tootoosis and Angela Janzen are among 24 Aboriginal people from across the country to receive Canada Post's 2011 Aboriginal Education Incentive Awards. The \$1,000 award recognizes those who have resumed studies after a minimum of 12 months out of school and have completed one or more years in an educational program. "The hard work and determination of these recipients have made a tremendous impact on their own lives and we are proud to recognize them today," said Bonnie Boretsky, vice-president, general counsel, corporate secretary and compliance, in a news release.

Creator of educational toolkit awarded

Sylvia Smith, who created Project of Heart, an educational toolkit that helps students understand the history of residential schools, received a 2011 Governor General's History Award for Excellence in Teaching. She is one of seven teachers across the country to be honoured. Smith grew up in Allen, Sask., and currently teaches at Elizabeth Wyn Wood Alternative High School in Ottawa. Since it was created in 2007, Project of Heart has been used by schools and community groups across Canada. It was also showcased at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's first national event in Winnipeg in June 2010. Smith is currently working on her master's degree in education through the University of Regina. She is interviewing teachers and their perceptions of working on Project of Heart.

Compiled by Shari Narine

Trust, relationship need to be rebuilt

By SHARI NARINE
Sage Contributing Editor

OTTAWA

First Nation chiefs met with Prime Minister Stephen Harper and 12 Cabinet ministers on Jan. 24 in Ottawa in the first ever Crown-First Nations gathering. The meeting was over a year in the planning and had been called for by Assembly of First Nations National Chief Shawn Atleo.

"(The chiefs are all) kind of optimistic, too. You want to believe something positive is

going to happen," said Tammy Cook-Searson, chief of the Lac La Ronge Indian Band, one of 400 chiefs in attendance.

Cook-Searson said after listening to everyone speak it became clear to her that trust was the underlying issue.

"One of the things (Harper) said that kind of struck me is he said that trust was broken on both sides, meaning that they didn't trust us and we didn't trust them," she said.

Too much bureaucracy and the Indian Act, she said, have in part led to that mistrust.

Mistrust is also about broken

promises, said Onion Lake Cree Nation Chief Wallace Fox in a prepared statement following the day's events.

"As Nations, we held up our end of the Treaty, yet this government continues to only pay lip service to our relationship. There is no divisible Crown. Canada by way of the enactment of the Constitution of Canada is obligated as a Treaty partner. Otherwise it is in breach of its obligations and in breach of the Honour of the Crown when dealing with Treaty Nations on resource revenue sharing

among other issues," said Fox.

Fox was one of four members who comprised the Saskatchewan delegation that met with Harper the evening before the gathering. Also part of that delegate was Marie-Anne Day Walker-Pelletier of the Okanese First Nation, Shoal Lake Cree Nation Chief Marcel Head and Little Black Bear First Nation Chief Perry Bellegarde. Harper met with about 40 chiefs that evening.

Harper originally intended to be at the Jan. 24 meeting for only the morning. However, his schedule was reworked so

he could remain for the day and also participate in break-out sessions.

Discussion centred mainly on economic development for First Nations and increasing employment, said Cook-Searson.

Three discussion groups were held and focussed on economic development, education and skills development, and treaty rights and land claims.

A progress report is to be presented no later than the one year anniversary of the meeting.

Growth, need of services push FNBC ahead of schedule

By SHARI NARINE
Sage Contributing Editor

SASKATOON

The First Nations Bank of Canada will cut its strings with The Toronto-Dominion Bank two years ahead of schedule. By early fall, FNBC will be independent.

"Every time you expect to do something before you plan to and especially when it's a positive change, it feels good," said Keith Martell, chair and CEO of FNBC.

Martell has been with the bank since its humble beginnings in 1996 when FNBC was created as a means toward Aboriginal economic self-sufficiency. The FNBC was an alliance between Saskatchewan Indian Equity Foundation Inc., Federation of Saskatchewan Indians, Inc. and TD. As there were very few small and

medium sized banks, FNBC joined with the TD. That has changed now, said Martell, with the advent of Credit Unions that have begun to grow and diversify.

"There are solutions that work really well. They are customizable for organizations of our size, they're flexible but they're powerful. They serve the customers very well. So that being available with our need, we felt we had the capacity to do it now and we should do it now," said Martell.

According to the FNBC's website, "The strategic directive of the founding shareholders was to grow the bank and increase Aboriginal ownership to the point that the bank would be controlled by a widely held group of Aboriginal shareholders." By late 2009, a share conversion was completed with TD and resulted in

Aboriginal shareholders from Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Yukon, Northwest Territories, Nunavut and Quebec taking ownership and control of over 80 per cent of the FNBC. Another goal set by FNBC was to transition away from TD by October 2014.

"It's not like TD is telling us we have to leave earlier. They gave us a lot of flexibility and they gave us a lot of leeway to be able to plan this to take longer, but we think we've got the capacity and the time is right to do it now," said Martell, who was appointed to his present position in 2009. Previous to that he was chair of the board of directors when FNBC was created and then later promoted to executive chair of the board.

FNBC's transition team is working out the logistics of the bank transitioning from TD's

platform to its own computer system. Changes, including FNBC's pending independence, haven't yet been communicated to clients.

"Our needs continue to grow and to be more specific to our bank," said Martell. "In order to serve that need and the growth we have in the north and support First Nation communities and Inuit communities, we want to tailor some of our products and services to that market. So if you want to continue to meet the needs of your customers you need to have a system you can do that with."

Pending growth includes a branch to be opened in Yellowknife. FNBC opened its seventh branch in Iqaluit in 2010. There are branches already in operation in the Yukon, Saskatchewan, Ontario, Manitoba, and Quebec.

FNBC's transition team is working out the logistics of the bank transitioning from TD's platform to its own computer system. Changes, including FNBC's pending independence, haven't yet been communicated to clients. Changes clients can expect to see include being served in their own language at some automated banking machines and having easier access to electronic transfers, a service that will be appreciated "especially in northern and remote communities where it's very costly sometimes to move \$100 in cash to your daughter who is going to school in Saskatoon or Regina," said Martell.

Registered mortgages on-reserve will also be available because FNBC can now put in to place the tracking system required by the Indian Act.

Partnership makes teen mentoring program possible

By ROY POGORZELSKI
Sage Writer

MEADOW LAKE

The Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Canada has partnered with Flying Dust First Nation to offer a teen mentoring program.

"This is a pilot project that was offered to Flying Dust First Nation, where the need for in-school teen mentoring was identified. This is a great initiative of active role-modelling that is needed in this community," said Josh Durocher, youth coordinator overlooking the program for Flying Dust First Nation.

Normally, Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Canada works with communities of a population of

at least 10,000.

"The reason for this being, it is a concern that programs need to be sustainable and occupy the capacity to grow," said Karen Shaver, vice-president of agency services with Big Brothers/Big Sisters (Ontario). "The problem with this (is) that most First Nations communities have been excluded and this needs to change."

The pilot project has been in the works for over a year and a half following discussion and consultation. This past October, the agreement was signed, which allows high school students from Flying Dust who attend school in Meadow Lake to be partnered with elementary kids from the

reserve.

The agreement makes Flying Dust an affiliate member of Big Brothers/Big Sisters, which provides support in the operation of the program.

"The overall excitement and response from students has been overwhelming. There are a lot of youth looking forward to getting started," said Durocher.

Durocher has been attending schools in the community of Meadow Lake to drum up interest from the students. Currently, there are 33 high-school youth that signed up on their own and 26 are Aboriginal. There is also a church group interested that would potentially add another 15 mentors.

The goal of the program is to get 40 elementary-aged students partnered with a role model. However, with all the interest there may be more mentors than children.

Durocher, since being hired as youth coordinator, has been attending after-school programming, which has generated a lot of buzz around this partnership.

"I am excited to get started with the program. Many of these children come from very broken homes with little support or stability. Often this affects the attendance of the children and their motivation to be in school. A positive role model can be the push that these children need to thrive and become more dedicated

students," said Durocher.

This one year pilot project has the potential to be a stepping-stone for other First Nations. The outcomes of the program will be reviewed at the end of the year to determine whether this type of mentoring project fits in with a First Nations model.

Durocher is optimistic. "This is a great program that will allow kids to have someone they can trust in the school who can guide them. I believe this program will be successful because of initial community response and the desire to see our children achieve success. I hope to see other First Nations communities provincially and nationally jump on board."

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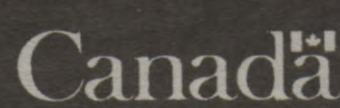
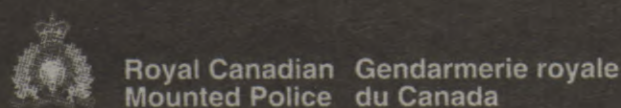
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**Aboriginal people
account for almost
three-quarters of
new HIV cases**



Margaret Poitras: CEO of All Nations Hope AIDS Network. (Photo provided)

By SHAUNA LEWIS
Sage Writer

REGINA

The HIV rate in Saskatchewan is twice the national average. In 2010, Aboriginal people accounted for 73 per cent (125 cases) of all newly diagnosed HIV cases. There were 172 HIV cases reported.

Dr. Johnmark Opondo, deputy medical health officer for the Saskatoon region, said the social determinants of health greatly influence the high numbers of Aboriginal HIV cases plaguing the province. Factors such as inadequate housing, low-income, poor education, unemployment and no access to social support substantially impact the health of individuals and communities.

"It's the poverty. It's the long-term disengagement with health care. It's the issue of drug use in the community," said Opondo.

The legacy of residential schools is also a determining factor on how First Nations people interact with the healthcare system, he said.

"Trust has been a major issue in their lives," Opondo said. "It makes people feel very suspicious of well-intended programs that are there to help them and they wait too late."

Opondo said the government's strategy is helping to provide better access to HIV prevention information and resources for Aboriginal people.

But, said Margaret Poitras, CEO of All Nations Hope AIDS Network located in Regina, the province needs to do more to reach the Aboriginal community. It is not enough that one of the pillars for the Saskatchewan Ministry of Health's HIV strategy is community engagement and

education if it doesn't take culture into consideration.

Poitras said that incorporating traditional teachings and culture when dealing with HIV among the Aboriginal community is important and could help raise awareness of HIV in many First Nation communities and eventually help make the issue less taboo.

"Expanding services to help Aboriginal people on their level will make a difference," said Poitras.

Furthermore, she said, the province needs to provide better access to HIV testing and information to Saskatchewan's urban First Nations, especially among the large homeless population in the city-centres.

"That's where the problem is, is in the city, it's not on the reserve. There are a lot of at-risk people off-reserve," she said.

Poitras said HIV information and resources should be readily accessible through all of Saskatchewan's existing Aboriginal organizations and more work needs to be done to fight the disease of addiction.

"(The government) calls the groups of those affected 'clusters,' but to us it's our family," she said.

Poitras said the high number of new HIV cases in Saskatchewan is unacceptable. Overall, in the last 10-year period, statistics show there has been a steady increase in the annual number of HIV diagnoses from 26 cases in 2002 to a peak of 200 cases in 2009. The high rates of infection in Saskatchewan are mainly due to intravenous drug use.

"We live in a developed country, we shouldn't have any babies born with HIV," said Poitras. "We want to get to the root cause and help them heal. It's not just an easy fix. There is no pill to fight HIV."

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Singing from different songbooks

(Continued from page 8.)

Stewart Miyo Jr., spokesperson for the Mohawk Traditional Council, said the people inside the building were selling themselves out, "...this conference is designed by the British Crown to suck in Native people into the system of where they will now be benefitting from the destruction of our Mother Earth. You see this by many Native leaders asking for their cut or share, saying we want to benefit from the sharing of our resources." The council is against resource development, especially with Native participation.

The Gathering ended with few commitments around education, self-government or common ground on resource sharing.

The day after the event, AFN National Chief Shawn Atleo gave a press conference.

"Right now, government feels that through their actions and through their regulatory processes and licences that First Nations are simply stakeholders. That simply is not the case. The

treaty relationship said that we would be full partners in designing and determining what would happen within our respective territories and that First Nations would benefit from the wealth and from the resources of the land."

Atleo also referenced the section in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples that speaks to free, prior and informed consent from First Nations on any developments in their territories.

In his speech the day before, the Prime Minister acknowledged the United Nations document saying "And, of course, we endorsed the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People. This reaffirms our aspiration and our determination to promote and protect the rights of Indigenous people at home and abroad. These things we have done, Ladies and Gentlemen, as a down-payment on what we wish to achieve."

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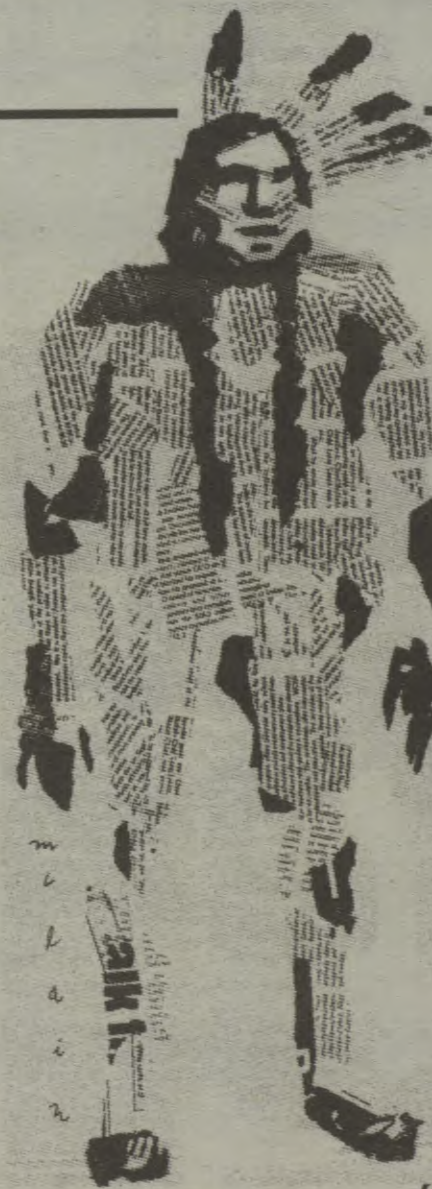
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Windspeaker: What one quality do you most value in a friend?

Torry Eagle Speaker: Honesty. We all need at least one honest friend to rely on.

W: What is it that really makes you mad?

T.E.S.: Negative people who try to bring me down. I've been told not to focus on it and to pray for those people, also to use reverse psychology, such as smiling or shaking hands with that person in a positive way.

W: When are you at your happiest?

T.E.S.: When I'm at a powwow with my family and friends.

W: What one word best describes you when you are at your worst?

T.E.S.: Over-thinker.

W: What one person do you most admire and why?

T.E.S.: My mom Tanya Eagle Speaker, because she is a hard working woman who strives to achieve her goals and never gives up no matter how hard the situation is.

W: What is the most difficult thing you've ever had to do?

T.E.S.: Having to see my late grandfather suffer with cancer for 11 months last year. It was very difficult to see him in pain. It matured me mentally, like it taught me to not take life for granted and that everything is going to be okay; not right away but eventually. Life goes on.

W: What is your greatest

accomplishment?

T.E.S.: I'd have to say winning the princess title Miss Manito Ahbee. This title will teach me to be more responsible, committed, and compassionate, because this title honours a young woman who went missing and was found murdered in July of 2009, Cherisse Houle. Also, to honor all the missing and murdered Aboriginal women in Canada. I will carry her story in my heart and carry to bring awareness of Cherisse and the missing and murdered Aboriginal women.

W: What one goal remains out of reach?

T.E.S.: Miss Indian World. Right now because of my age and my post-secondary school plans, but it is something I will strive for in the future.

W: If you couldn't do what you're doing today, what would you be doing?

T.E.S.: I really can't imagine doing anything else because I am happy and content where I am at. I have a great family, wonderful friends and I am looking forward to going to college or university.

W: What is the best piece of advice you've ever received?

T.E.S.: To respect myself and to respect others, and to treat others the way I want to be treated.

W: Did you take it?

T.E.S.: Yes I did.

W: How do you hope to be remembered?

T.E.S.: I hope to be

remembered as someone who is humble, respectful, friendly, and has strong morals and values.

Torry Marie Eagle Speaker was crowned Miss Manito Ahbee Travelling Princess for 2011/2012. Torry started dancing at the age of eight learning traditional dance and then began training as a hoop dancer.

Torry hails from the Blackfoot and Dene Tribes and her Blackfoot name is Miistamohkspiakii, which means "Holy Red Dancer." It is her grandmother Maggie Eagle Speaker's name.

As Torry grew she continued her studies of traditional dance and was crowned at age 13 the 2007 International Peace Powwow Miss Junior Blackfoot Canada. She was also named Kainai Senior Princess for 2008/2009.

Torry comes from a family of two very supportive parents—Myron and Tanya Eagle Speaker who travel with her on her trips, as well as siblings Kalli, Darby and Darcy. Torry speaks very highly of all her family and understands the importance of passing along the traditions of her tribe. She has taught dancing to younger children in the Blood Tribe. As well as her duties as Miss Manito Ahbee Travelling Princess, Torry is able to maintain a work/life balance. She has her hobbies of sewing, beading and music and Grade 12 to finish. She



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

Torry Marie Eagle Speaker - Miss Manito Ahbee 2011

hopes to continue on to post-secondary education.

She says of her future, "My ambitions will always include learning and upholding our cultural teachings so that one day I may be a knowledge keeper of our language and culture. I will continue to dance, attend ceremonies and learn my

Blackfoot language." She acknowledges the many distractions and pitfalls that can befall us by also saying, "In my ambitions I will strive to be a good role model to my peers and family by practicing a clean and sober lifestyle. I will uphold my values of compassion, humility and love in all that I do."

[radio's most active]

OUR PICK

Artist—Garry Oker
Song—Ride
Album—Ride (2011)
Label—Independent



Garry Oker is an artist who has gone beyond the single medium most artists get pigeon holed into. This cd shows he is still evolving. This album of music is Oker's musical journey into his Aboriginal identity. As one can appreciate, spirituality is part and parcel with Aboriginal culture and Oker allows us to join him in his discovering and sharing of his renewed warrior spirit.

The feel of a concept album should be noted as there is a flow from one song to another. Each song representing the journey of self discovery and Indigenous perspectives on moral and ethical standards. You should read the liner notes on the inside package as it sets the stage for listening to this musical montage. The easy going acoustic melodies are gentle on the ears. The words and presentation have an honesty to them that will connect for others on a similar spiritual and cultural journey. Oker reminds us of the four principles of his culture; Respect, Discipline, Ceremony and Honour.

Oker demonstrates that the hybrid of Aboriginal music, instruments and rhythms blend well with modern contemporary music as the two music styles weave a flow that is very much a ride of music with cultural wisdom thrown in. The first time you listen to this album, if you can find a quiet peaceful place to listen, you'll appreciate the depth of the art Garry Oker shares with you.

As one quote inside the album cover states, "It's time to Indian Up and Ride, Damn it!" This might be the album you'll ride off listening to.

Review by : K. Kantan

ABORIGINAL RADIO MOST ACTIVE LIST

ARTIST	TITLE	ALBUM
David St. Germain	Come Over	My Country Strong
John McLeod	Amigo	Do It Anyway
Little Hawk	Beautiful Me	Vigilance
Nathan Cunningham f T.L.	The Wildflower	Single Release
Lori Cole	Caught Up In You	Single Release
Jade Turner	The Way You Are	Thanks To You
The Outlaws	From Hell To Paradise	The Outlaws
Don Amero	Life Is Sweet	The Long Way Home
Vincent Angus	Angel	Single Release
Kyla Cederwall	Little Red Chevy	Single Release
Delbert Trotchie	Only If There Is Another You	Country Classics
Murray Porter	I Feel Lucky	Songs Lived And Life Played
Harry Davies	I Can't Be Myself When I'm With You	Single Release
Jonathan Todd	Where Did I Go Wrong	Single Release
Leah Hunt	Need Someone To Love Me	Single Release
Jerry Sereda	My Heart's Got A Memory	My Heart's Got A Memory
Crystal Shawanda	Fever	Single Release
New Brew	Stoned At The Jukebox	Looking Back
Joanne Shenandoah	She Was Born	Life Givers
Hector Menow	Rain Song	Rain Dancing

CONTRIBUTING STATIONS:



Ontario Birchbark: Special Section providing news from Ontario

Protecting treaty rights at every turn

Iskatewizaagegan Independent First Nation in Ontario is working to protect its inherent and treaty rights in the Shoal Lake watershed area of their territory.

Chief Eli Mandamin sent letters to two companies conducting business within the watershed that have significant impacts on the Nation's inherent and treaty rights, as well as long-term implication for the environmental health of the area, he said.

The companies are Royal Lake Resorts, Inc. and Tabl'eau Filtered Water. Both are Manitoba-based companies that are conducting businesses using the nation's resources, Iskatewizaagegan insists.

Royal Lake Resorts is a planned upscale waterfront development on Royal Lake in Ontario. Royal Lake is within the Shoal Lake watershed and the development is located on the north side of Highway 17 (TransCanada Highway).

"It has become a contentious focal point in the negotiations between the nation and Ontario Ministry of Transportation concerning a planned twinning of Highway 17 from the Manitoba border to Rush Bay, Ont.," a press statement reads.

A significant portion of the highway design plans to route the proposed expansion south of the existing highway and into an area that the nation says will threaten fresh water springs and an important spiritual site.

In the case of Tabl'eau Filtered Water, the nation recently became aware of this company and its plans to take Shoal Lake water, bottle it and market it overseas.

In a letter dated Jan. 30,

Mandamin has notified the company that their plans are unacceptable saying "we hereby request that you cease and desist in this effort to misuse our water, and failure to do so may result in legal action being taken."

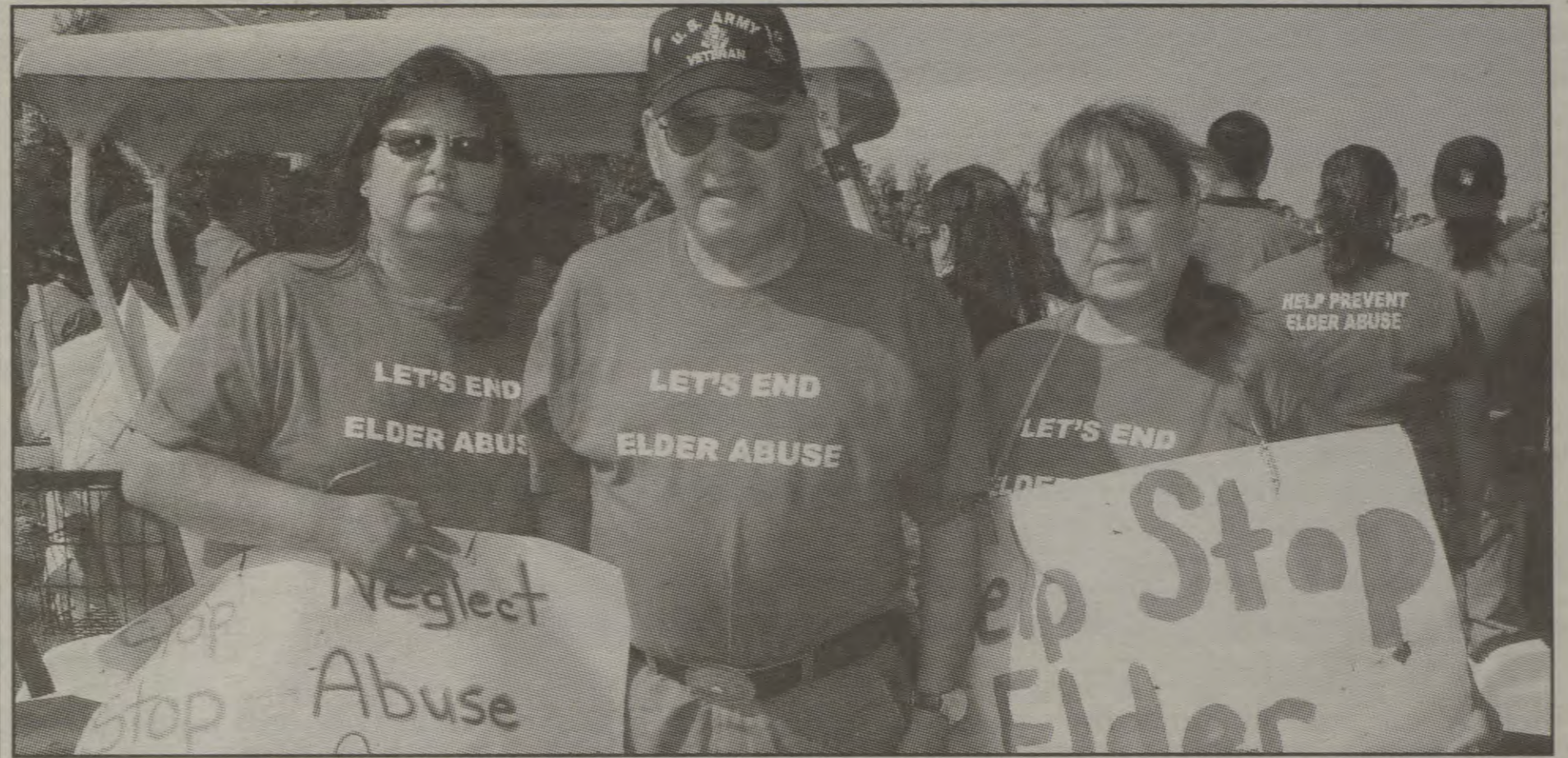
The nation views this company's efforts as a continuing violation of the terms and conditions for use of Shoal Lake water. The nation says the International Joint Commission made it clear that water from Shoal Lake was to be used only for Winnipeg, St. Boniface, Transcona, Assiniboia, Fort Garry, St. Vital and Kildonan, not the United Arab Emirates where the water company plans to sell the product.

It is the nation's position that corporations, or other business entities, are subject to the legal mandate of consultation and accommodation as much as governments are, the statement reads. In the Treaty 3 territory this mandate is further heightened by the following treaty requirement:

"Her Majesty reserves the right to deal with such settlers as She shall deem just so as not to diminish the extent of land allotted to Indians; and provided also that the aforesaid reserves of lands, or any interest or right therein or appurtenant thereto, may be sold, leased or otherwise disposed of by the said Government for the use and benefit of the said Indians, with the consent of the Indians entitled thereto first had and obtained."

The chief said he hopes that the companies see the wisdom of complying and choose to meet with the chief and council.

Elder lived his life as an example to the young



PHOTOS: SUPPLIED

Harold "Skeezix" Peters passed away Jan. 19.

By **EMILIE CORBIERE**
Birchbark Writer

Walpole Island First Nation said goodbye to beloved Elder Harold "Skeezix" Peters on Jan. 19. Skeezix had long been an advocate for Walpole Island, often standing up to protect the sensitive ecosystem that surrounded the island or standing up against Elder abuse.

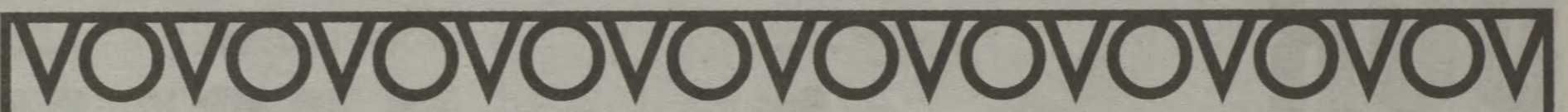
The funeral took place on Jan. 22 at the Walpole Island Sports Complex. More than 500 family and friends arrived to pay their respects to a man who touched

all of their hearts. Stories were told of his days spent in residential school and while readers are familiar with the horror stories around those institutions, Skeezix never had a negative thing to say, instead telling people that it was definitely a learning experience.

Skeezix was also a decorated veteran who served in the Korean War and this led to being the president of the Veterans Association. This also led to the honor of carrying the eagle staff at many powwows. On many days Skeezix could be found

riding his bike or just walking around the island to stay healthy. He led a good example of clean living to the youth on the island.

He found the love of his life in his bride, Audrey Jean. Together they raised Arnold, Curtis, Julie, Tammie, Theresa, and the late Brenda, Layton and Kelly. He was a wonderful grandfather to 15 grandchildren and 29 great grandchildren. Skeezix himself came from a big family, being the brother of Donald, Lloyd, Georgianne and the late Connie, Darryl, Edward, Gretchan, Betty, Helen, Arlita and Patty.



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Small changes are steps in the right direction

By Shauna Lewis
Windspeaker Contributor

VANCOUVER

While many of us are making (and breaking) well-intentioned New Year's resolutions, one First Nation leader is sticking to his goal to live better in 2012.

Grand Chief Doug Kelly said he plans to incorporate more physical activity into his life this year.

"It's not so much a plan as a goal in increasing my physical activity," said Kelly, who is the grand chief of the Sto:lo Tribal Council, as well as a leader within the First Nations Health Council.

Kelly, who tells us he's been obese since childhood, said he knew he had to do something positive for his body when a post-holiday realization hit him in the waistline.

"After Christmas I discovered that my wife was shrinking some of my clothes and she didn't even have to wash them," Kelly said with a chuckle. "Now that's magic!"

"It was then that I knew I had to increase my activity level."

Prior to his journey to better health, Kelly said his work, which has him sitting behind a desk and travelling extensively, had been catering to his overall lack of physical mobility.

"When it comes to work and exercise, work always wins," he said, adding that he often spends five or six days at work and

countless days driving extensively to out of town meetings, leaving little time for himself.

But on Jan. 3, the date of his eldest daughter's birthday, Kelly vowed to change his life and decided to make himself as much of a priority as his work.

While he is an avid, long-time golfer, Kelly said he needed to get more involved in activities that upped his cardio level and gave him the workout he needed.

Along with regular six kilometre walks near his home on the Soowahlie Indian Reserve located near Cultus Lake, B.C., Kelly has also taken to cycling, an activity he said has been a passion since his childhood.

When he is on the bike he generally rides for at least 30 minutes, although once he rode for an hour and twenty minutes, a ride that Kelly said "left my legs feeling rubbery."

But while he may have overdone the bike ride, Kelly said he knows what his body can and can't handle and he admits that concerns of straining himself has influenced his decision to forgo a gym routine until he loses some weight.

But while he is taking things slow at first, Kelly is conscious of the fact that this healthier lifestyle will prolong his life.

"I want to make sure that I'm in a position to enjoy my family," he said, adding that he wants to be around to witness any future expansion of his already large clan.

"My oldest daughter has a daughter, my granddaughter, who is three years old. If I want to live to make old age and see my granddaughter married, I'm going to have to avoid some health challenges," he said, adding that certain health issues such as heart and stroke risk, diabetes and obesity run in his family.

"As the chair of the First Nations Health Council and as someone who is working and pushing to improve the health and wellbeing of communities, it has to happen with me," Kelly said confidently.

In most cases health concerns are preventable and people only have to examine their lifestyle and make changes accordingly to better their health.

A long-time, self-professed 'yo-yo dieter,' Kelly said that his weight fluctuated in his thirties, and he would "lose weight and then gain it back and then some."

Today, at 51, Kelly said this new journey to wellness is not so much about weight loss as it is adopting a healthier and more active way of life. Kelly said if he can incorporate more physical activity into his daily routine then the weight will take care of itself.

"I want to make this a habit that I can keep."

In the few weeks since Kelly began his journey to health, he said friends on the social media site facebook have commented that he is inspiring them to live healthier lives.

"People are saying that I'm

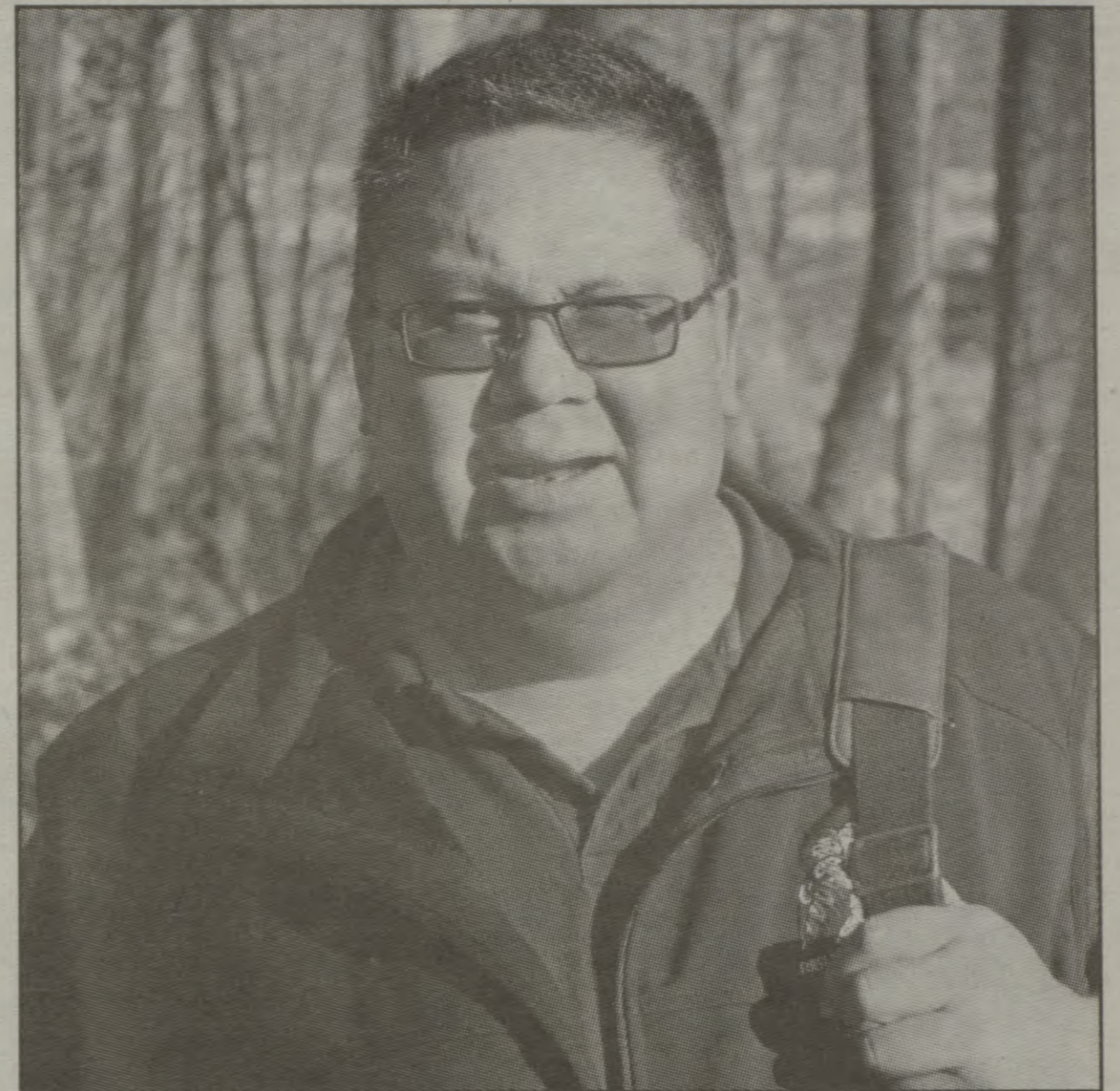


PHOTO: PROVIDED.

Doug Kelly is working to increase his physical activity in 2012.

reminding them that they need to do things for themselves."

But while he may be an inspiration to some, Kelly admitted that he is only human, and like most people, can feel lazy.

"It is hard some days to get motivated. There are days when I don't want to do it. But those are the days when I have to do it."

Although Kelly said he is not on a strict diet, he is trying to incorporate more fruits and vegetables into his meals and said he has cut down on cola and potato chips, foods he admits he

loves.

Asked if he had any tips or words of encouragement for others striving for a healthier 2012, Kelly simply said making small changes are steps in the right direction to a healthier life.

"I think the stress of day-to-day life and especially struggling to make ends meet can be difficult for some."

Active living mustn't break the bank.

"It doesn't have to mean an expensive gym pass," he said. "It can be a walk along the river or the beach."

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Sports Briefs

By Sam Laskaris

Influential women

Minister of Health Leona Aglukkaq and Olympic boxing medal hopeful Mary Spencer are among those selected to a prestigious group of women. The pair was among 20 names announced in mid-January as having made the list of Most Influential Women in Sport and Physical Activity for 2011.

The list is annually compiled and released by the Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women and Sport and Physical Activity (CAAWS). The list recognizes women who are leaders and role models making a difference either in Canada or on the international scene.

Aglukkaq, an Inuk, was named to the list for her influence and leadership in addressing childhood obesity. She's using her current portfolio to work with officials across the country to promote healthier lifestyles.

Spencer, who is Ojibwe, is a three-time world champion. She is favored to win a medal at this summer's London Olympics. Women's boxing will make its Olympic debut in London.

The CAAWS list has been released for the past 11 years. Those who are selected are athletes, coaches, officials, politicians, professors, administrators or volunteers.

Some of those on this year's list have also been previously named other years. For Aglukkaq and Spencer this marked the first time that they had been named to the list.

The CAAWS also has a 'Ones To Watch' list and named a pair of women to that for 2011. Spencer had been on the 'Ones To Watch' list in 2010.

Besides public nominations, sport and physical activity leaders can make submissions for those they deem worthy of being on the list. A CAAWS selection panel chooses those who eventually make the grade.

Bourque traded

Rene Bourque is still playing for a National Hockey League team in Canada, but it is not in his home province.

Bourque, a Metis born in Lac La Biche, Alta., was traded from the Calgary Flames to the Montreal Canadiens on Jan. 12. Bourque had spent the past three-and-a-half seasons in Calgary. Prior to that the 30-year-old left winger had played three years with the Chicago Blackhawks.

Bourque enjoyed his most productive years in the NHL while in Calgary. His career high of 58 points (27 goals, 31 assists) was registered during the 2009-10 season.

Bourque had 50 points last season with the Flames.

But he was struggling somewhat this season with his point totals. He only had 16 points in 38 games with Calgary.

Bourque had three points, including a pair of goals, in his first five matches with the Canadiens.

Bourque was part of a multi-player deal that brought him to Montreal. The most notable player that headed to Calgary in the swap was Michael Cammalleri.

Youth tournaments

More than 100 teams are expected to compete in what is believed to be the longest running Aboriginal sports event in North America.

The 41st annual Little Native Hockey League—more commonly known as the Little NHL—tournament will be staged March 11 to 15 in Sudbury.

The event has certainly grown in size and stature over the years. During its first year, 1971, the tourney attracted 17 teams.

The event, which includes both female and male clubs, features players as young as three up to 18. Meanwhile, about 40 teams are expected to compete at the Little Bands Native Youth Hockey Tournament. The event will be staged Feb. 14 to 19 in Sioux Lookout, Ont.

The tournament will feature five age groupings, ranging from novice (5-7) up to midget (15-17). There will also be atom, peewee and bantam divisions.

The majority of the contests will be held at the Sioux Lookout Memorial Arena. Some games might also be staged at the Eagle Lake First Nation Arena.

National volleyball championship

Aboriginal volleyball clubs will be vying for national bragging rights this summer in Akwesasne. The eastern Ontario community will be the site of the 2012 Aboriginal National Invitational Volleyball Championships.

The event is scheduled to begin on July 29 and continue until Aug. 3. The tournament will be staged at the A'nowara ko:wa Arena, which is also home to the Akwesasne Warriors, a minor professional squad in the Federal Hockey League. The event will feature youth and adult divisions, for both female and male teams.

The youth categories that will be contested are under-13, under-15, under-17 and under-21. And there's two adult groupings, 22 and over and 40-plus. The adult portion of the tourney will be staged first, from July 27 to July 29. The youth categories then start on July 30.

More information is available by contacting Kahnastatsi Nancy Jacobs at (613) 575-1594.

[sports] Set realistic goals, says Fit First trainer

By Sam Laskaris
Windspeaker Contributor

WINNIPEG

Kent Brown finds himself in a new fight.

Instead of duking it out with others, Brown, a former Canadian boxing champion, is helping others in their battle to lose weight.

He's the fitness trainer on *Fit First*, a popular documentary series that follows four Aboriginal women in their quest to shed pounds and become healthy.

Fit First is in its second season and broadcast on the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN).

Brown, a 40-year-old who is from the Fisher River Cree Nation located in Manitoba, is thrilled to be involved with the television program.

"I've always wanted to do something like this," said Brown, adding he is friends with the show's host and producer Stephanie Scott. "I've known (Scott) for a few years and I was bouncing stuff off of her for at least five-six months (before the first season)."

Brown, who recently opened the Winnipeg Elite Boxing and MMA Academy, said there is no acting involved with his role on the show.

"You get the real me," he said.

The participants in the show's second season range in age from 23 to 63. And their weight ranges from 185 pounds to 280.

The oldest competitor is 63-year-old Geri Von Ramin, a great-grandmother who weighs 185. She does feel unhealthy but is not looking to lose a set number of pounds.

Brown said show organizers were looking to find participants at various stages in their lives.

"That's the whole point, that they can do it," Brown said of the show's contestants.

The other competitors this season are Krystal Beel, Elizabeth Denny and Michele Henry.

Beel, a 23-year-old, began the season weighing 280 pounds. Denny, who is 38, was 270 pounds. And Henry, 45, was 211 pounds.

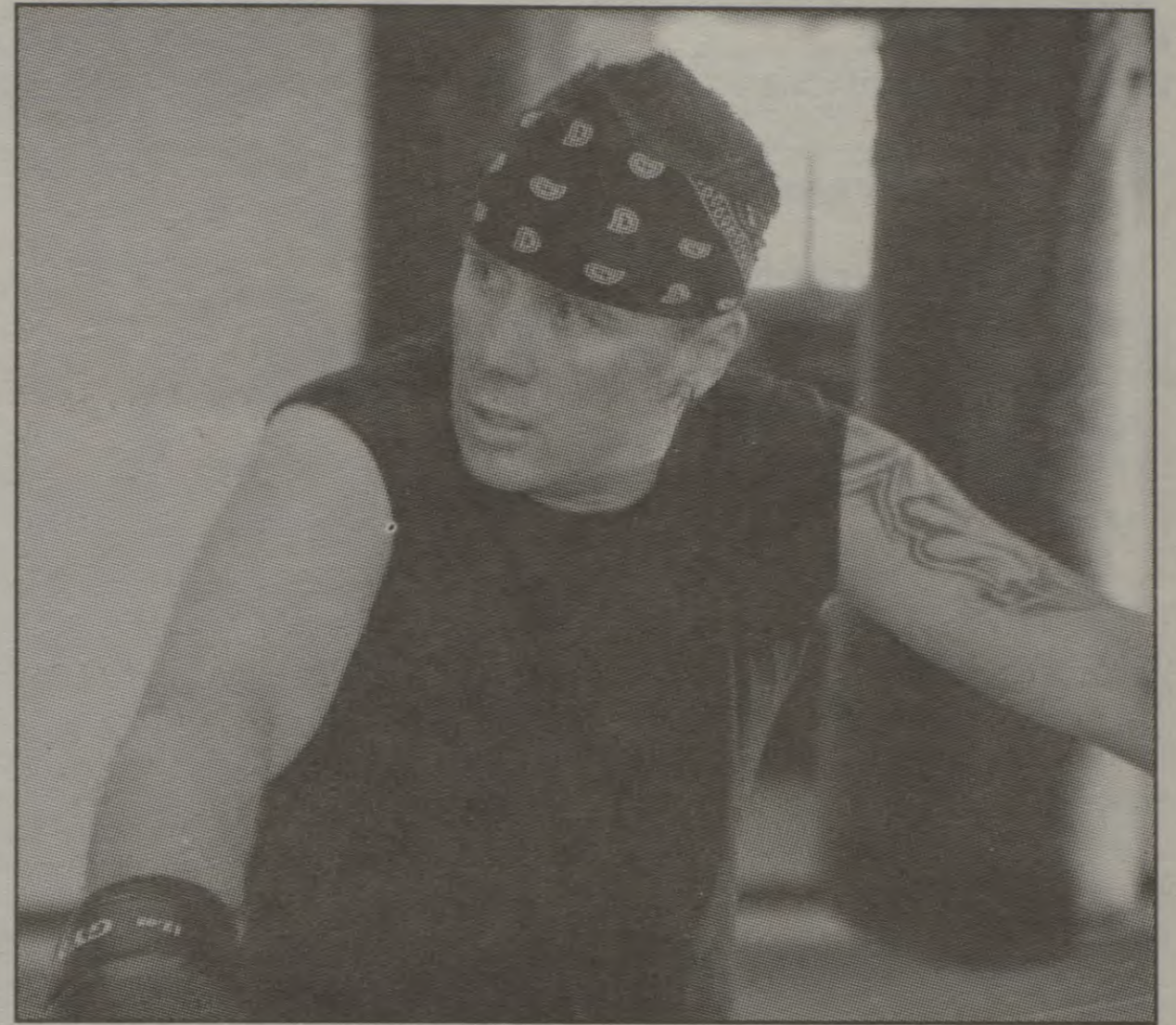
Fit First follows the lives of the participants over a period of six months. All four women share the same goal of changing their lifestyles.

Besides working with Brown, the competitors also benefit from the advice of a nutritional expert.

Brown though is hoping to help more people than just the four participants on *Fit First*. He's hoping Aboriginal people across the country are inspired by the program and decide to take action themselves.

"I want our people to get back to our active society and doing things like living off the land," he said.

Brown also said he gets upset



Fit First fitness trainer Kent Brown

PHOTOS: COURTESY FIT FIRST



Fitness trainer Kent Brown (right) and *Fit First* participant Elizabeth Denny

when he hears about health issues Aboriginal people have, including the high number of those who have diabetes.

"That's not us," he said. "We need to get a healthier nation."

Fit First is receiving some rave reviews.

"It says a lot when we're running 8 p.m. on Tuesday night," he said.

The first episode of Season Two aired Jan. 24. The second season consists of six half-hour episodes.

"We're hoping for a third season," said Brown, a past president of the Manitoba Amateur Boxing Association.

Other TV shows, most notably *Biggest Loser*, have a similar plot, following contestants in their quest to lose weight.

"I think ours is being more realistic and not putting unrealistic goals on these people," he said. "The idea is you don't have to lose 300 pounds to get healthy."

As for his boxing career, Brown took up the sport in his teenage years. He had more than 120 bouts during his career and won 105 of them.

Brown was the Canadian lightweight champion in 1999

and 2000. And he won a bout at an Olympic qualifying tournament in Mexico, which gave him the right to compete at the 2000 Sydney Olympics in Australia.

But a day after his victory, Brown's victory was reversed as judges said there had been a scoring snafu. As a result, Brown did not get to compete in the Olympics.

"It was horrible," he said of the incident. "It left a bad taste."

Brown did manage a career highlight a couple of years later. He won a gold medal at the 2002 North American Indigenous Games staged in Winnipeg.

Though he still steps into the ring to spar, Brown has not had a fight since 2004. But he said he is not retired.

He's contemplating whether to enter the Ringside Boxing Tournament, an annual world championship that features boxers age 35 and over.

The 2012 tournament will be held in August in the Kansas City located in Missouri.

Brown has yet to compete in the Ringside Boxing Tournament.

"I might get to it this year," he said.

[education]
Funding equity negotiated for BC on-reserve schools

By Shari Narine
Windspeaker Contributor

VANCOUVER

A new tripartite agreement will provide First Nations students learning on reserve in British Columbia a more level playing field with their public school counterparts.

"It provides us with comparable funding that we didn't have before...and now we have the opportunity to be funded more appropriately and deliver quality programs," said Debbie Jeffrey, executive director of the BC First Nations Education Steering Committee.

FNESC is one of the signatories of the agreement that was signed on Jan. 27 with the federal and provincial governments.

Through the Tripartite Education Framework Agreement, the federal government will provide an additional \$15 million annually to First Nations schools and students.

"The agreement is tied to the provincial government model based on the operating grants manual which generates all of the funds," said Jeffrey.

Studies undertaken by FNESC indicate that First Nations students learning on reserve are funded at 40 per cent less than their provincial public school counterparts.

An interim band operating funding formula struck with the BC regional office of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs Canada in 2005 dropped that discrepancy to 20 per cent for First Nations students in BC.

However, that funding was unsustainable regionally, said Kristen Harvey, communications director with FNESC. With the new agreement, funding will be fully covered by Ottawa.

Discussions for the Tripartite Education Framework Agreement began last summer, six months after the federal government announced the optional new approach to education funding for First Nations in BC.

In a news release issued by the federal government, ANAC Minister John Duncan stated that the new investment of funding for K-12 education, which was included in the 2010 budget would be "targeted to First Nations in British Columbia based on the advanced state of the education partnership in the province."

"We've had our organizations for over two decades now, getting organized and supporting our communities and with that length of time we've built solid partnerships, established memorandums of understanding) not only with Canada and the province, but with other educational partners,"



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

Signing the Tripartite Education Framework Agreement for British Columbia (from left) were Debbie Jeffrey, executive director with First Nations Education Steering Committee; Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Minister John Duncan; Tyrone McNeil, president of FNESC; and Nathan Matthew, Chief of Simpcw First Nation and FNESC advisor/negotiator.

said Jeffrey.

That relationship continues, said an Education Ministry spokesperson. Through the framework, the province has agreed to consult with FNESC regarding any proposed changes in provincial education policy.

This is not the first time FNESC has worked with the federal and provincial governments to further First Nations education in BC. In 2006, federal Bill C-34, the First Nations Jurisdiction Over Education in British Columbia Act, was developed in partnership with the federal and provincial governments and FNESC. The bill allowed each First Nation community to determine the needs and structures of its own education system. In 2007, the province passed legislation supporting the federal legislation.

Jeffrey doesn't see the signing of the tripartite agreement as premature considering the National Education Panel, appointed by the federal government and the Assembly of First Nations, has yet to make its recommendations regarding First Nations education. She noted that when the panel was in BC, members were informed of the tripartite agreement which was then being negotiated.

"I'm hoping when the national panel report comes out there will be recognition for the need for diversity across the country," said Jeffrey.

Jeffrey said the FNESC has "flagged" some areas of the tripartite agreement for ongoing discussion, including funding for technology and transportation.

"We want to really do our homework and find out what the actual costs will be so we can implement accordingly," said Jeffrey.

Participation in the tripartite agreement is up to individual

First Nations. The FNESC is presently holding regional meetings to inform bands and councils of the details of the agreement and the impact it could have for local schools.

"We've done a lot of work negotiating this agreement on the part of our organizations. We're satisfied with what we've been able to achieve and codify within the agreement," said

Jeffrey.


First Nations have until March 15 to send in a Band Council Resolution indicating their support to come under the tripartite agreement.

Jeffrey noted that participating in the tripartite agreement does not mean a First Nation cannot pursue jurisdiction.

The tripartite agreement states: "The Parties acknowledge that

any British Columbia First Nation may choose to enter into negotiations and conclude a self-government education agreement pursuant to the First Nations Jurisdiction over Education in British Columbia Act and become a Participating First Nation, as defined in that Act, in which case this agreement will no longer apply with respect to that First Nation."


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For More Information
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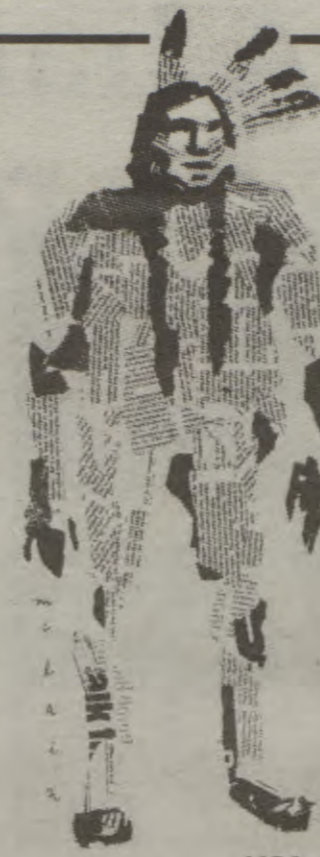


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[news]
**Banishment: A hammer to control
 unlawfulness on reserve**

By Shari Narine
 Windspeaker Contributor

LAC LA RONGE, Sask.

On Jan. 4, membership of the Samson Cree Nation voted in favor of the *By-Law Governing the Residency of Members and Other Persons on the Samson Cree Nation Reserve*.

A push for a means to control violence on the First Nation came to the fore in 2011 when, over a two-month period, two innocent people were killed. Five-year-old Ethan Yellowbird was asleep in his bed in July 2011 when bullets tore through the house on the reserve; gang violence was to blame.

Samson Cree Nation is waiting for Aboriginal and Northern Affairs Canada to review the bylaw before it can be implemented.

"Only time will tell," said Lac La Ronge Indian Band Chief Tammy Cook-Searson, if the bylaw controlling residency on

the Samson Cree Nation will have the desired effect.

For at least 15 years, the Lac La Ronge Indian Band in Saskatchewan has practised banishment. The Band Council Resolution (BCR) was in place when Cook-Searson joined council a decade and a half ago. She has served as chief for seven years.

Cook-Searson doesn't view the BCR as a deterrent for poor behaviour.

"It's like a restraining order, saying you're acting in a manner that people don't feel safe so you're going to have to leave the community," she said.

Banishing someone falls fully on the shoulders of Lac La Ronge council. A councillor will bring forward the BCR for banishment. The person facing the charge has the right to respond, then council votes. A quorum majority is needed for the BCR to take effect. No one is banished for life.

"We always provide an

opportunity for people to come back if they decide to change their behaviour or (address) why they were asked to leave," said Cook-Searson. The most recent BCRs delivered have seen banishment implemented for a one-year period.

When council has made the decision to banish either non-band and band members, the RCMP are notified. The BCR gives the RCMP the authority to enforce the banishment.

The RCMP is guided by each band's BCR or bylaw, said Sgt. Patrick Webb, media relations officer with the RCMP in Alberta.

"It's just like how we're guided by a federal statute or a provincial statute. That statute passed by elected officials dictates the authority we have to enforce it," he said.

Webb said RCMP authority in eviction bylaws or BCRs can range from delivering the eviction notice to physically escorting someone to the reserve's

boundaries.

"The actual actions taken will vary as will the specifics of the BCR," said Webb.

Ahousaht First Nation in British Columbia is in the process of adding those specifics to its existing BCR, which backs up the practise of banishment that has been carried out by the traditional chiefs for a very long time.

"We have to catch up with the times," said Curtis Dick, deputy chief councillor. "There is a fine line we're walking between our traditional system and our elected systems and our European system. Our elected system is very difficult and it's got stipulations and it's got processes and ... we have to walk in a land mine."

Presently RCMP can do very little in Ahousaht to assist in the banishment of drug dealers or other people who are deemed harmful to the community.

The Samson Cree bylaw provides the RCMP with "full and sufficient authority to enforce ... including the authority to arrest and/or forcibly remove persons from the reserve who are not authorized to be present upon the reserve."

It also establishes a Residency Tribunal appointed by chief and council which would deal with applications from people who wish to reside on the reserve and applications from people who wish to evict someone who "would present a danger to the health or safety of the community."

Under the residency bylaw, any 25 residents can apply to evict

another resident from the reserve. The petition goes to the tribunal, which in turn makes recommendation to the chief and council. A special two-thirds majority vote by chief and council is needed in order for an eviction to occur.

If BCRs or bylaws are properly followed by the RCMP, there are no Criminal Code implications, said Kathleen Mahony, but there still could be Constitutional implications.

"The Charter (of Rights and Freedoms) says it's OK for the government to take away your security as long as the person who's evicted gets treated within the due process of the law," said Mahoney, who is a professor in the Faculty of Law at the University of Calgary. Mahoney's area of expertise is in human rights.

"Due process" means, in part, providing a clear definition of who can be evicted, if there is a hearing, and if there is an appeal process in place.

Eviction bylaws and BCRs have been adopted by a number of First Nations across the country. Mahoney said there is no surprise that none have been challenged yet in court.

"People subject to these bylaws are not people who are going to have a lot of resources to take a Charter challenge," she said.

But on the flip side, Mahoney said, "there seems to be some merit in respecting those processes as long as they are not unfairly applied. It's a feature of unique self-government that First Nation communities are entitled to invoke."

PUBLIC NOTICE

PENGROWTH ENERGY CORPORATION

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT ACT

NOTICE OF APPLICATION

AMENDMENT TO EXISTING IN-SITU PROJECT

In accordance with the Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act, Pengrowth Energy Corporation has applied to Alberta Environment and Water for an amendment to an existing approval to expand the Pengrowth Lindbergh SAGD Pilot Project to a commercial-scale project. The expansion would include an increase of 1,787 m³ per day (11,240 barrels per day) for a total estimated production rate of 1,987 m³ per day (12,500 barrels per day) of bitumen. The Pengrowth Lindbergh SAGD Project would include a central processing facility, co-generation, the existing pilot project, and associated infrastructure (e.g., road, pipelines, power lines and well production pads). The operation is located in Sections 13, 14, 23, 24, 25 and 26 Township 58 Range 5 West of the 4th Meridian (approximately 22 km southeast of Bonnyville, 18 km north of Lindbergh, and 19 km east of Elk Point).

Pursuant to section 73 of the Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act, any person who is directly affected by this operation may submit a written statement of concern regarding this application. Failure to file a statement of concern may affect the right to file a Notice of Appeal with the Environmental Appeals Board. Such a statement of concern must be submitted to:

Director of Northern Region
 Alberta Environment and Water
 Regulatory Approvals Centre
 Main Floor, 9820 - 106 Street
 Edmonton, Alberta T5K 2J6
 Fax: (780) 422-0154

within 45 days of the date of this notice. Please quote Application No. 007-1581 when submitting a statement of concern in regards to the Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act application.

NOTE: Any statements filed regarding this application are public records which are accessible by the public.

Copies of the application and additional information can be obtained from:

Pengrowth Energy Corporation
 Attention: Steve De Maio
 2100, 222 - 3 Avenue SW
 Calgary, Alberta T2P 0B4
 Telephone: (403) 233-0224
 Fax: (403) 265-6251
 Email: Lindbergh@Pengrowth.com

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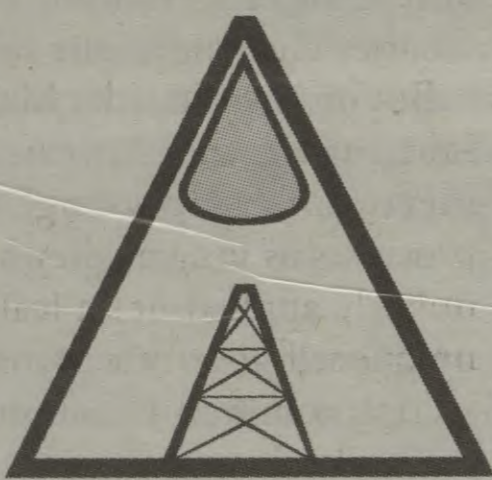
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Closing Date: February 26th, 2012



INDIAN RESOURCE COUNCIL

**DIRECTOR, BUSINESS CENTRE
(INDIAN RESOURCE COUNCIL OF CANADA - IRC)**

The IRC, located on the Tsuu T'ina First Nation, established the National Energy Business Centre (NEBCE) four years ago with the mandate to provide (oil and gas) expertise and capacity enhancement programs to its First Nations members.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

Reporting to the President/CEO of the IRC, the Director is the senior staff member of NEBCE and is responsible for the overall direction and operation of the Centre. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to, managing the human resource requirements of the Centre; providing and managing requisite (oil and gas) expertise and capacity needs of First Nations; ensuring financial sustainability of NEBCE; liaison with the oil and gas industry; liaison with training institutions; formal reporting to funders and to the IRC; and other duties as directed by the President/CEO of IRC.

QUALIFICATIONS:

The ideal candidate should demonstrate sound knowledge of the oil and gas industry through formal university training; however, a combination of experience and training will be considered. Also, knowledge of unique First Nations oil and gas issues and HR needs will be required for this position. Finally, the position requires excellent writing and oral (presentation) skills.

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START DATE: April 01, 2012

DEADLINE: Please submit Letter of Interest and resume by February 17, 2012 to:

Roy Fox, President and CEO
Indian Resource Council of Canada
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BC Housing www.bchousing.org/careers

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Selection for an interview is based on the applicant's package in reference to the TDSB system needs for the school year. High need program areas are: **Aboriginal Studies, Native as a Second Language, Music, French Immersion, and Special Education in the areas of Autism, Blind, Deaf and Hearing Impaired.** Interviews usually commence in February and continue based on high need areas.

For more information, please visit our website at www.tdsb.on.ca and select **EMPLOYMENT** from the home page.

We thank all candidates who apply, however, only candidates selected for an interview will be contacted.

The Toronto District School Board adheres to equitable hiring, employment and promotion practices.

[footprints] Alma Kytwayhat

Grandmother inspired and encouraged young people with her teachings

By Dianne Meili

By late afternoon it might normally be difficult to engage 32 brains in a Grade 5 classroom, but when the now late Alma Kytwayhat was invited to share Indigenous ways of knowing with students, minds remained alert and the questions came fast and furious.

The Saskatchewan Cree Elder, who long served as a "kehtayak" (knowledgeable person) for the Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools, could easily fascinate her audience with discussions of plants and traditional healing remedies, the myriad uses of the buffalo, and how she could predict the weather by observing the phases of the moon and the behaviors of different kinds of animals.

"As an Elder, she knew her stuff," said Major Nolan Kemp. He worked with Alma in another of the many roles she assumed with various provincial and national institutions—that of Kohkom (grandmother) for Bold Eagle, an Army Reserve Basic Military Qualification course of the Armed Forces.

As coordinator of the summer youth program, Kemp worked with Alma for three years.

"She helped mentor, develop and guide the program," he said. Her involvement with Bold Eagle stretched back well before his time, and he recalled fondly that she liked to say she was the proud grandmother who provided inspiration and guidance to more than 1,000 participants over the years.

"I had a good opportunity to get to know her," Kemp added. "She was like a member of my family." He described the easy rapport Alma established with recruits during the first week of traditional culture camp. Her words of encouragement and inspiration served to build a strong sense of teamwork early

on in the program "and that carried many youth through the five weeks of basic training that followed.

"She had a way with young people that endeared them to her," Kemp observed. She spoke about traditional customs, spirituality, and was involved in the weekly sweatlodge ceremonies offered to recruits. Also available to them in individualized "elder hours", she listened to their personal issues and concerns and motivated them through the challenges they faced.

"She was definitely 'the rock' of the program," Kemp said. She initially joined as Elder-in-Residence with her husband Simon, who passed away in 2008, but kept on with the program until last year.

Originally from Thunderchild First Nation, Alma moved to Makwa Sahgaiehan First Nation when she married. There, she started her family, initiated the daycare facility and worked as a Community Health Representative.

Over the years, Alma conducted workshops in traditional cultural practices, focusing on women's health and healing. As she learned more about spirituality from attending ceremonies and learning from other teachers, her reputation as a "knowledge keeper" grew.

Her work with the Office of the Treaty Commissioner's Speaker's Bureau was especially important to her, as she endeavored to "help teach more than 7,000 Saskatchewan schoolteachers about the history and meaning of treaty," said Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN) Vice Chief Morley Watson.

"She also did so much work with non-First Nation people, teaching them about Cree



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

Alma Kytwayhat participating in the Bold Eagle Program

language, culture and traditions," he added.

Alma helped deliver comprehensive mandatory treaty education programming in the classroom, and was interviewed during the compilation of information sheets about the role of First Nations women in treaty negotiations.

"It was just as much the women's responsibility to be involved in the treaty negotiations as were the men," she said. She explained that once the First Nations men and women made their decisions and negotiations took place, the women attended and "they sat where the chiefs and councilors sat to give them support and encouragement."

Even though the women may not have spoken directly to the negotiators, they were still valued for the strength they provided the leaders by their presence. The

older women, in particular, were there to "make the negotiations stronger, to give strength, encouragement, compassion and kindness to the men," she added.

"As a result of the power and sacredness that a woman holds, it is only natural to realize that women were just as involved in treaty negotiations as the leaders."

In 2007, Alma was appointed as an Elder on the Saskatchewan First Nations Women's Commission and was appointed as a member of the FSIN Senate.

Alma's family wrote in her funeral notice that she loved to laugh and joked that she was "taller than the Queen." She traveled nationally and internationally, but loved her role as a mother and grandmother. She enjoyed being out in nature and every late summer and fall she could be found gathering herbs and filling her berry basket.

Over the years, Alma received the Lifetime Achievement Award, Women of the Dawn First Nation Award, Citizen of the Year – Indian Government Category, FSIN Circle of Honour, and is listed on the Honour Wall of the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, DC. She was also the recipient of the Canada 125 Commemorative Medal and the Saskatchewan Centennial Medal.

Assembly of First Nations National Chief Shawn A-in-chut Atleo called Alma "a traditional woman well-versed in Cree customs, traditions and languages." He noted that many people sought her advice and knowledge about treaty matters.

Alma Kytwayhat passed away on Sept. 19, 2011.

agreements, First Nation, Justice Murray Sinclair, veterans, Treaty Rights, role models, showcase, INAC, www.ammsa.com, Aboriginal Healing Foundation, mother earth, Residential Schools, poverty, Shawn Atleo, AIDS, Inuit, elections, Stephen Harper, scholarships, honour, Sisters in Spirit, service



Treaty 8 First Nations of Alberta Grand Chief Richard Kappo (left) and APEGGA President Jim Smith, P.Eng., FEC, officially sign the Memorandum of Agreement on Jan. 26 at APEGGA's office in Edmonton.

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- Working together to identify and employ best practices to remove barriers and create strategic opportunities that foster successful First Nations learners.



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